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MODERN JUSTICE

Copyright, 1906,
by
RHODA O. R. REICHEL

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A DRAMA IN FIVE ACTS

By
Rhoda O. R. Reichel

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PERSONS REPRESENTED

BRANDENFELLS. . . . . Clothing Manufacturer.
ROSA . . . . . His wife.
EMILIE. . . . . His Sister (an old maid).
STELLA . . . . . His Niece.
LENA . . . . . A Servant.
LANGE . . . . . Business Partner.
JACOB. . . . . Porter.
BACHMANN . . . . . Manager.
SELKOFSKY . . . . . Foreman.
SAM . . . . . His Right Hand.
JUTTA. . . . . Sam's Wife.

IKE ROSENWATER . . . . .
KOLLER . . . . .
KRUSE. . . . . Employes.
HINTSE . . . . .
LINDE. . . . .
DOHRING. . . . .
SCHULTZE . . . . .
MULLER. . . . .
ISIDOR . . . . .
SCHMIDT. . . . .
MRS. MAYER. . . . .

MRS. LANSKY. . . . . Stella's Friend.
MRS. GEISSLER. . . . .
LORENS . . . . . Artist.
MOSES . . . . .
MRS. SOUPA . . . . .
GROTH . . . . . Barkeeper.
MAXEL. . . . . Bartender.
BURGDORF. . . . . .
HELLING . . . . . Journalist.
ROMEO. . . . . .
MILTON . . . . . Shoe Manufacturer.

Four women, a little girl, a young lad, several Jews, people, chief of police, and three officers.

PLACE: Acts I, II, and III in Austria; IV and V in America.

TIME: Acts IV and V, Present; I, II and III, six years past.

ACT I

Office; To right and left a door. In center, near wall, a small table and two chairs. To the left a desk; near the wall a buffet with different bottles of liquor, wine and cigars.

LANGE. (*Middle aged, tall, robust and dark, lost in soliloquy, holding up two pairs of silk hose, then carefully wrapping them up.*) Great woman this! Such arms and such shoulders! (*Motioning to throw her a kiss. Aloud.*) Here, Jack, take this package to Miss Noll, and tell her how highly I worship her. (*Rubbing his hands. To himself.*) What a surprise this will be for the little dear!

JACOB. (*Taking the parcel, mumbling to himself.*) O! the deuce! How highly he worships her. Anyhow, she lives on the 13th floor and I guess that is high enough.

LANGE. Hurry up, Jack! Hurry up!

JACOB. (*Aside.*) Old monkey! (*Exit* JACOB.)

(LANGE *sits down at his desk, straightens books and papers, every once in a while putting his hand on his pocket, as if to make sure of the contents of same.* JUTTA *enter.*)

LANGE. Good morning, my dear child, how did you rest. (*Rises and approaches her, while she tries to avoid him.*) What. Still so bashful. (*Aside.*) We'll fix that.

JUTTA. I ask you all the time, you leave me alone mit your cheek—

LANGE. (*Reassuringly.*) You call that cheek? My dear woman, I like you. I love you——

JUTTA. What! You love me? Such monkey business! You such a gentleman, and me a poor working woman—a Jewess! No, you too funny for anything; but I'm no simpleton; I'm not soft.

LANGE. (*Trying to pass her some money.*) Come on, now, my little pet, you are not sweet sixteen any more——

JUTTA. (*Resenting in disgust.*) I like your gall! I never seen anything like it! You t'ink you can buy the honor of a woman with money. Not much!

LANGE. (*With a sly look toward her, putting his hand into his pocket, as if trying to find something.*) I thought to have discovered in this beautiful little head, notions of free ideals; but to all appearance this is rather contradicting.

JUTTA. Free ideals! What you mean?

LANGE. What do I mean. Very simple—free love, I mean.

JUTTA. Ah—ye! Well, you have a funny idea of free love! Freedom does not teach brute force and low moral.

LANGE. (*Somewhat surprised.*) Would you please give me a clearer definition of what what you mean, my dear child?

JUTTA. I explain to you. I not have enough education to explain such a lofty subject to a fine gentleman as you. (*Exit* JUTTA.)

LANGE. Lofty! That's great, and from such rosy lips! (*Getting serious.*) Too bad about the dear little thing—the like of which should really be reserved for—— (BRANDENFELLS *enters; short, dark blond, about* 50, *good natured, nervous.*)

BRANDENFELLS. Good morning, old man. Seen the mail? Good news? (*Hangs up his hat.*)

LANGE. Good morning. Some big orders came in. (*Aside.*) We'll fix that.

BRAND. Hm—Hm—Then there will be——

LANGE. Coming down stairs I found this. (*Hands* BRANDENFELLS *a paper.*) What do you think of it.

BRAND. (*Reads.*) What? No rules, no laws! down with capital? And what do you think of it? (*Excited.*) They should be strung up! They should all hang together! The mob! Such scoundrels!

LANGE. I suppose that would be the best cure for them, but I am afraid we would see some of our best hands hang with them. Sam is one of them.

BRAND. What! You don't say! Our men? They must be discharged this very day, every one of them! The rabble! At once, I say!

LANGE. Easy! easy! I would not get so excited; besides, I am not altogether sure of it. They're not the only yellow dogs.

BRAND. Why—that is clear as daylight. How do you suppose this paper got here, and you don't suppose—allow me—you don't suppose I would permit such a gang to remain under my roof. Don't

Come on now, my little pet—you are not sweet sixteen anymore

you see this. "Down with Capital." I would be in constant fear of being burned alive in my own house.

LANGE. Now, my dear sir, that is not done so quickly. You know dogs that bark don't bite. How often have they been on strike, and how did they succeed?

BRAND. Strike! What do you mean by strike?

LANGE. Why, when they think they have a grievance and make a big bow-wow, that's what they call strike. They are too cowardly to resort to arms. (*Goes and takes two cigars out of the buffet, one for himself, and handing the other to* BRANDENFELLS.) Listen, Mr. Brandenfells. I have a different idea. (*Lights cigar.*) You know we have about fifty thousand dollars of orders on hand. The factory is not large enough. Now, next door, which is vacant, we could rent for about two thousand dollars a year.

BRAND. (*Interrupting.*) That is all very well; but you know yourself what condition our finances are in. (*Taps nervously with fingers on table.*)

LANGE. I know; but, look here, my dear Brandenfells; let me explain. I have only commenced to give you my view. Now, what we might do is to put the cutters next door. You know, wool is just now so much higher, while the goods may have to be sold a shade lower, consequently, to meet the difference, we will be obliged to reduce wages. (*Winking.*) You understand. Two birds with one stone.

BRAND. So you think, by reducing wages you can subdue the mob. At the same time——

LANGE. (*Interrupting.*) Yap, exactly what I mean.

BRAND. And how do you think to accomplish this?

LANGE. Very simple. We'll make Bachmann manager and Selkofsky superintendent.

BRAND. Hm—and if they refuse to accept the conditions?

LANGE. What! Refuse? I don't wish to hurt your feelings; but mighty little you know about human nature. In the first place, take a Jew, give him a chance to get ahold of money, and you can twist him around your little finger. Then, in the second place, you've got to hold those dogs tight, so they don't bite; you've got to squeeze the loafers so they barely have enough to eat. Make em beg for work

and bread—that's what you've got to do with those curs; then they'll be at your mercy.

BRAND. Look a-here, my boy, you are either a thousand years ahead of or behind the times, I don't know which; but do as you see fit. I don't want to have anything to do with such business. (*Excited.*) I don't want to be guilty of it!

LANGE. Easy, easy! Don't fly off the handle! (*Aside.*) Fool! (*Aloud.*) Shall I 'phone for Bachmann?

BRAND. (*Scratches his head.*) Well, I'm anxious to know what is going to come out of all this, and if these people are going to submit to it.

LANGE. (*Aside.*) Old fool! (*Aloud.*) These men will take a whole lot more. (BACHMANN *enters; tall, bony, dark hair and eyes, good bearing.*

BACHMANN. Good morning, gentlemen.

LANGE. (*To himself.*) Speak of the devil, and he is sure to appear.

BRAND. Good morning. (*Extends his hand to* BACHMANN.) What is the good news, Mr. Bachmann? The order to Mr. Rosenthal delivered?

BACHMANN. Not quite. To fill the order we got yesterday, we'll need an extra sixty pieces of goods. Outside of that, we'll have to transfer the packers to the basement, or we won't be able to turn around.

BRAND. Would not that give you more trouble.

BACHMANN. It would somewhat inconvenience us, but that should not matter so much.

LANGE. Well, I would not care to inconvenience you more than necessary. A man like you, that has always guarded the interests of the house, deserves more consideration.

BRAND. Take a seat, Bachmann. We might as well talk it over now, and see what can be done. (*Offers him a seat while* LANGE *offers him a cigar.*) You say sixty pieces, and to-day an order came in for three hundred skirts, Nos. 22, 24 and 26. That would require considerably more, which, all together, would rather crowd us up stairs.

LANGE. (*Quickly rising.*) We'll have to make a change somewhere. We cannot have the men packed togehter like sardines in a box. Now, that building next door is vacant, with about as much floor space as

our own, and since we are satisfied with a smaller percentage on our goods—orders have nearly doubled over last year—of course, our expenses will be greater too, but it will enable a less fortunate class to clothe themselves better and more as they desire.

BACHMANN. I understand.

LANGE. As we enlarge, we should need some trustworthy man——

BRAND. Whom could you suggest, Mr. Bachmann?

BACHMANN. Selkofsky is one of our best men, and thoroughly honest.

LANGE. So Selkofsky is your right-hand man. But who could take his place?

BACHMANN. Sam Elsan would be the best man for that position.

BRAND. Sam?—well—yes, but——

LANGE. You mean Jutta's husband?

BACHMANN. Yes, sir.

BRAND. Yes, but, isn't Elsan (*nervously*) isn't he an anarchist?

BACHMANN. I would not positively say that he is that, though I know he is a free thinker; but as to that, most of the men hold such views. But, as regards business, you can surely depend on him.

LANGE. How is he situated financially?

BACHMANN. As much as I know, not very well. His furniture he has on installments, and——

BRAND. But there is no necessity for him to do that, is there? Besides that, Jutta is earning wages.

BACHMANN. He supports his folks and an invalid sister.

BRAND. (*In surprise.*) Out of his wages?

LANGE. (*Restless. Aside.*) Old fool! (*Aloud.*) Talking about anarchism—what do you understand by it? That these people do not want to recognize authority? Does n't Sam come under your jurisdiction?

BACHMANN. That he does; but only because he has to.

BRAND. How so? I don't understand that——

BACHMANN. In no way do I let him feel my authority. I look upon him as my equal.

(BRANDENFELLS *again nervously scratches his head.*)

LANGE. (*Sarcastically.*) You mean as a Hebrew, as one of your race?

BACHMANN. (*Slowly.*) No, as a human being.

LANGE. Ah! that's it! In other words, these people want a free hand—do as they please—build up and destroy, as they take a notion. One pulls this way, the other that. (*Rises, hands in his pockets, pacing up and down.*) Indeed, that isn't bad, and before we know it, these people would be bosses, and we their workmen. Not bad at all. Ha—ha—ha—ha! pretty good! (*To* BACHMANN.) Don't want laws, either, do they?

BACHMANN. No coercion. Absolute freedom in their individual action.

BRAND. But who compels these people to do things they don't care to do?

BACHMANN. Circumstances, Mr. Brandenfells; existing conditions.

LANGE. Conditions? (*Cynically.*) Perhaps civilization or progress?

BACHMANN. That is what it is called. The primitive state of our social conditions forces the working people to put in twelve to fifteen hours of work a day, to enable them to eke out a mere existence.

BRAND. (*Excited.*) If you please, no man is forced to work fifteen hours a day.

BACHMANN. You must not forget, Mr. Brandenfells, a great deal, or rather the greater part of all misery, never reaches the ear of the public. Take a trip through many of the streets of our larger cities, and you'll find children—oh, it is a shame!—poor, delicate creatures, many of whom are considerably under fifteen years of age, toiling, huddled together in factories, factories in name, but really sweatshops and prisons. There they sit, from seven in the morning till ten and eleven at night, and work, work, until their little backs ache and their eyelids droop from overexertion, and want of sleep—poor, wretched children. Yet, the city authorities are amazed at the constant increase of that most dreaded disease, consumption, and seem to be puzzled at the cause of these terrible conditions, especially amongst the working class.

BRAND. But, my dear Bachmann, you don't mean to say that we manufacturers are responsible for these conditions. You see, the market demands the production; naturally the manufacturer looks to the work-people to make the goods. Now, then, if eight hours a day

do not suffice to supply the demand, of course, we'll have to work nine and ten.

BACHMANN. Yes, but all that would not be necessary, if we would furnish work for all those that are unemployed. Statistics show that if work were distributed amongst all, employed and unemployed, four hours a day would more than suffice to produce all that is needed.

LANGE. Four hours! Ha ha! pretty good! And what on earth would these people do with all their spare time?

BACHMANN. Well, I don't know. What do gentlemen do—those that don't work at all?

LANGE. (*Slowly.*) Oh—well—that is altogether different. They are a different class of people—people who have education, and, what is more important—money. Where you find that, the days are often even not long enough.

BACHMANN. I believe that. But, why isn't the working man entitled to as much education as the rich?

LANGE. Hardly; simply because they have not the means to pay for it.

BACHMANN. Money! money! and again money! In other words, only those that have money have a right to live.

LANGE. Not so. Don't the poor live just the same?

BRAND. (*Aside.*) Well, well, he has run across the right kind of a man. I wonder how this is going to develop.

LANGE. Besides that, you must admit that the workingman could save considerable more of his wages, if it were not for his extravagance and dissipation. Take the workingman of the past generation. He was a mere slave compared to the workingman of to-day, and yet, now they are dissatisfied.

BACHMANN. In my opinion the workingman does not live at all, I call that existing; and what you call dissipation is merely the just desire to partake of the fruits of his own labor.

BRAND. (*Aside.*) I believe that man is right.

BACHMANN. Then, you must not forget, general knowledge progresses, and in his leisure, a man is enabled to compare between himself and the capitalist, until he reaches a stage where he tries to break the bonds, which have been imposed upon him.

LANGE. Leisure! The working class! To bewail their condition! There is an easy cure for this. But, look here, my dear Mr. Bachmann, you don't want for anything, nor do I, so why bother our heads about other people. Let every one look out for himself. We forget, over this sentimental foolishness, our purpose. (*Aside.*) That fellow has got to be bribed pretty well. (*Aloud.*) Mr. Brandenfells' idea is this: (BRANDENFELLS *looks astonished.*) We rent that building next door. Then you take the position as manager, while—that is, if you think best—Selkofsky will be promoted to superintendent. Of course, your's and Selkofsky's salaries will be raised substantially.

BRAND. You see, my dear Bachmann, that we are trying to do what is right. (*'Phone rings,* BACHMANN *is called up stairs.*)

LANGE. (*Detaining* BACMHANN.) Just one minute, Mr. Bachmann, we nearly forgot the most important thing. As you know, wool has gone up twenty per cent. While we cannot raise the price on our customers, of course, we will have to sacrifice some. At the same time, it would be only fair that our men should share a part of the loss, and I would suggest this: We reduce our profits to the extent of ten per cent, while the men bear the remaining ten per cent, until wool comes down again.

BACHMANN. Oh, Mr. Lange, I am afraid that is going to cause trouble, since this would be the second reduction for the present year.

BRAND. (*Nervously.*) Can't be helped, Mr. Bachmann. My God! we are trying our best, you can see for yourself. (*Aside.*) A little more and I'll have to start all over again, as employee in my own factory.

LANGE. Well, then, let them work overtime, or we'll take on others. You said yourself there are thousands of unemployed.

(*'Phone rings again for* BACHMANN.)

BACHMANN. I'll see what I can do, Mr. Brandenfells.

(*Exit* BACHMANN.)

BRAND. Why did you say this was my proposition.

LANGE. When. How so. Oh, you mean—— Well, don't you see—you don't understand—that's what we call diplomacy. That man hasn't much use for me, and that's why.

BRAND. I am afraid we won't have very smooth sailing. You can read and hear about discontent all over—nothing but trouble. People act as though they were crazy!

LANGE. I warned you at the time not to employ Jews.

BRAND. Well, and how many have we in our employ?

LANGE. Three-fourths of all we have. Or did you think a Jew would give Christians the preference? Ha—ha—ha—— You might have known better. The next thing we can expect now is a strike. These gentlemen are very quick to act—though they forget they only hurt themselves—for they are not powerful enough to down capital, and where human power fails, this (*produces roll of bills*) will do the trick. The only authority they recognize.

BRAND. But, my dear sir, you must admit that should the men balk in earnest we would be in great danger—to go bankrupt; all the more, as Bachmann would surely withdraw his interest.

LANGE. As to Bachmann's interest, that is your affair; that does not concern me, though, should it come to the worst, we must not give in an inch. We'll have to fight, and fight to the last drop of blood.

BRAND. Fight to the last cent, you mean.

LANGE. (*Irritated.*) It means about the same. Had I been boss that time, not one Jew would have entered this place. They deserve to be kicked—kicked like a—(*grinding his teeth*) never mind—you wait —you confounded lot, I dare you to challenge capital.

BRAND. Are Christians, perhaps, an exception?

LANGE. Yes, they are. They obey, when you tell them to shut up, and work when you want them to. Look at the editorials of foreign papers. This mob sticks together, as though they were glued together.

(*Boy enters with letter to* BRANDENFELLS.)

BRAND. (*To himself, reading.*) So at last, that old goose. (*To* LANGE.) I have word my sister has arrived. (*Taking hat and coat.*) I may be back a little late. Good-by.

LANGE. One moment, Mr. Brandenfells (*takes cash book from his desk*). What's to be done with this. You know it's three weeks overdue now.

BRAND. Why do you ask me? You know what you have to do.

LANGE. Very well, then, would you kindly take a look at this. (*Opens book and points to a certain page.*) Here is where your control ends. (BRANDENFELLS *nervously turns over several pages, wiping perspiration from his forehead.*)

BRAND. What? Is it possible? During all this time I thought I had——

LANGE. That's none of my business; and to explain to you, however, it's a fact.

BRAND. Then you might just as well give me the broom, so I can sweep your office.

LANGE. No nonsense, Mr. Brandenfells. You know I am not that kind of a man. Why don't you meet me half-way? I do the same thing, you know.

BRAND. What do you want me to do. You want me to pull the irons out of the fire for you. You want me to fight out the whole thing with the men. It was not my idea, to reduce their wages, it was yours, you diplomat——

LANGE. Why so excited, my dear sir. That wasn't what I meant at all. That's a mere nothing. I meant a different proposition.

BRAND. Listen, Lange. I know what you are driving at; but, before I would let you marry my niece, I'd rather send a bullet through my brain.

LANGE. Well, then, you'll have to bear the consequences. Don't forget, though, that others will have to suffer. Don't you think of your wife, and your lovely niece?

BRAND. Can't you understand me. Do you expect, because I have been unsuccessful as a business man, that I should sacrifice my niece, never—never! The thought alone would be a crime. Listen, Lange. Do as you please. Your highest ambition is to see your name in gold letters over the old house of Brandenfells. In this you have now reached your aim. But never will you marry my niece. Her tastes and ambitions are far different and above yours. Good-by.

(*Exit* BRANDENFELLS.)

LANGE. (*His eyes following* BRANDENFELLS *in deep chagrin.*) Too bad! What a fool you are; though it may be better this way. Then—but then (*clenches his fist*) then I'll take care of you. You'll learn to obey! How I hate them—how I despise them—those Jews! They shall be kicked—kicked out of the land. If any one dare protest—Wait, you'll know me. (*Hand to forehead, lost in thought.*) Where have I seen this face—those staring eyes—and that nose—where, I wonder. After all, I guess it's only an every day face. (*Goes to*

There is, where your account ends

'phone. Enter JUTTA. *Turns to her.*) Listen, my dear child. (IKE, *a discharged workman enters.* LANGE *to* IKE.) What do you want? Who are you? What's your name?

IKE ROSEWATER. My name is Ike Rosewater. I was docked $1.25 last week, and I want my money.

LANGE. (*Sits down again in rocker.*) Ike Rosewater? Hm! smells like it! (*Holds his breath.*) I don't think! (*Laughs aloud.*)

IKE. Please, Mister, I ask you for my money. My wife very sick, and I hard up.

LANGE. Will you work for six dollars.

IKE. (*Nervously twists his hat in his hand.*) By God, Mister, I swear, I cannot work for six dollars.

LANGE. The devil you can't. You cannot work for six dollars, but starve you can. Go on; get out of here.

IKE. Every penny you keep is a drop of blood of a workingman. Every one of those pennies is the groan of a sick woman. Every penny, mark my word, Mister, is going to be a hundred weight on your conscience.

LANGE. Go on! Get out of here, you confounded Jew, or I'll——

IKE. (*Dries the tears from his eyes.*) Not necessary, Mister. I'll go. May the money you have stolen make you happy.

(*Exit* IKE.)

LANGE. (*Paces up and down.*) Confounded nuisance that——

(*Peddling Jew enters office.*)

PEDDLER. Good morning, Mister. Want any nice suspenders, toothbrushes, matches.

LANGE. (*Angry.*) Get out! Can't you read? "Peddlers keep out."

PEDDLER. Oh, no, Mister, me no can read——

LANGE. Go on—go on—I don't want you Sheenies——

(PEDDLER *exit, but enter next office door.*)

PEDDLER. Shoe blacking, polish, buttons, this morning.

LANGE. (*Mad with rage.*) What's the matter? Jerusalem let loose today?

PEDDLER. (*Sarcastic.*) Don't get scared. I the same man. My! you such polite peoples.

(*Exit* PEDDLER.)

LANGE. A Jew is a Jew. Fire him out of one door, and he comes in the next. (*Looking around.*) Where is Jutta, I wonder? Could she possibly have——? Ha! she would be about the only one that would not fear my power. I have cleaned whole communities of this plague—and there—I should not be able to conquer this woman. This, here (*pulls out a roll of bills*) conquers men, women, the whole world. Mammon gets for us anything we want. Money buys everything—esteem, confidence, even a good name. With money we turn this world into a paradise. It is our comrade and friend, and the highest ambition, for the low class, for which they will sacrifice health and even life. It is the all-moving power, and rules the world. You anarchists and secret societies, your idle talk will never succeed in breaking this lion's neck, your efforts are in vain. No human strength will break the power of the always almighty dollar—and a good thing for us (*laughs hoarsely. Noise from above and on the stairs attracts his attention. Pulls out his watch.*) What! three minutes to twelve, and already they quit! (*His clenched fist pointed to the ceiling.*) Thieves! Never mind, not much longer, and you will be in my power. That kind old fool of Brandenfells clings to a straw like a drowning man. All I have to do is to withdraw my support, and over he would go. But my opportunity has not come yet. For the present I need him, though it may cost me a thousand or two. I must have a satisfaction, and revenge is sweet. I shall not forget those hisses and rotten eggs, you damned Sheenies. I'll make you suffer yet. (*Rings bell, boy enters.*) Tell Bachmann the men quit ahead of time, and I want everybody to make up one quarter of an hour for this, this evening. I'll be back at two o'clock.

BOY. Yes, sir. (LANGE *puts on hat and coat. Exit.*)

(*Through the open door,* JUTTA'S *voice is heard.*)

JUTTA. Leave me alone! Leave me alone, I tell you! (*Comes running into office, her hair mussed, sinks in chair, burys face in hands.*) All that I must take from that wretch; if I don't, I lose my bread and butter. What did he say. You are beautiful. (*Rises, goes to looking-glass, straightens her hair.*) Yes, I am good looking; yet, what does it amount to. With all my good looks, my poor, wretched sister has to suffer privations just the same, where she was unable to care for herself—and depended on me. Oh, when I think of it (*shudders*) those

terrible days—terrible. And to have to show a pleasant face to everybody, and jest and laugh, when my heart wants to break. Oh, it is terrible. (*Suddenly straightening up.*) But no more, I will not stand this any longer. I have learned to earn my bread as a decent woman, and if he dares to come near me again, I will slap his face.

(*Exit* JUTTA.)

ACT II

SCENE: Brandenfells' home. Elegantly furnished dining-room.

BRAND. (*As he enters.*) Come in here. This is more comfortable. (*Looking at his watch.*) By the way, it's nearly time for dinner. (EMILIE *and* ROSA *enter.*) Well, Emilie, how do you like this room?

EMILIE. Oh, very nice. A little loud, don't you think?

ROSA. But modern.

EMILIE. When does Stella come home? I suppose she is rather a pretty girl? Is she much like her father?

BRAND. Yes, Emilie, Stella has developed into a nice, sensible girl. Too bad her parents have been so hard hit by misfortune. Her future looked very bright. She could have accomplished a great deal. But now—I am afraid circumstances——

ROSA. And what would she have been? She ought to be glad that we, or rather I, took care of her. It was best for her. I'll show you, Emilie, what disgraceful books she reads.

BRAND. Disgraceful books! My dear child, what do you know about books? Don't make yourself ridiculous.

ROSA. (*Ignoring* BRANDENFELLS.) Look here, Emilie. (*Picks up some books from a bookcase.*) Here are Kant, Schopenhauer, Rosseau, Emerson, Darwin, and a number of other disgraceful literature——

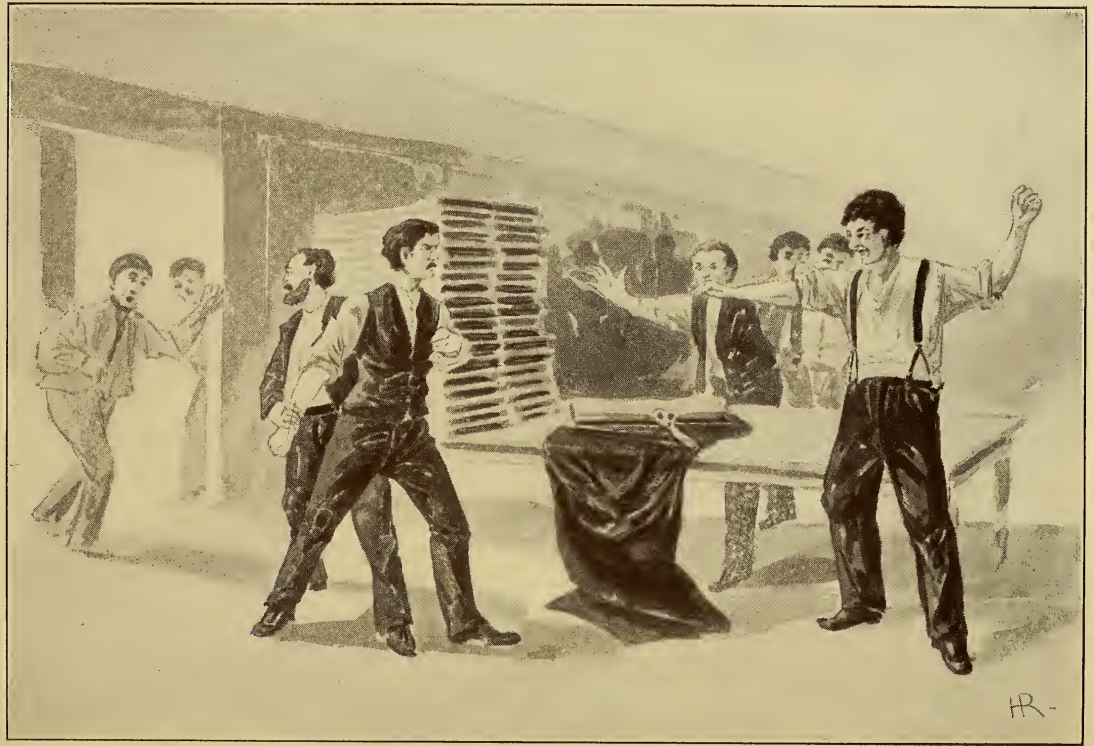
EMILIE. Albrecht! For goodness' sake!

ROSA. (*To another bookcase.*) And here are some more. What do you think of it?

EMILIE. For heaven's sake! (*Wringing her hands.*) That is not literature fit for a young girl—a girl of her class!

BRAND. Pardon me, Emilie, but I don't think you know much more about these things than my wife. Look here, my dear sister, you forget times change; the world progresses, you know, and we old ones are apt to get a little out-of-date——

ROSA. She doesn't go to Church at all, and (*somewhat hurt*) when I have company, the young lady retires. I suppose she prefers to be



Darn you—We won't stand for that

alone with those disgraceful books. (*Excited.*) I am not going to have it any longer!

BRAND. (*Disgusted.*) You leave her alone! Besides, if she would rather study, and prefers to read her books—which, by the way, are excellent literature—I can hardly blame her, instead of gossiping with a lot of washerwomen.

EMILIE. You are a——

ROSA. Washerwomen?

EMILIE. (*To* ROSA.) What do you say?

ROSA. No—you speak!

EMILIE. My! Albrecht! how you have changed! Have you lost all faith? Don't you know that your Day of Reckoning will come some day?

BRAND. (*Stretches himself.*) Yes—yes—too bad!

ROSA. (*Vexed.*) Washerwomen! You call my lady friends? Washerwomen, did you say?

BRAND. (*Curtly.*) That's what I said! That is all you and your friends do—gossip, gossip, never say anything good about anybody——

ROSA. (*Rises in anger.*) That is an infamy! Inconsiderate as ever!

EMILIE. And I think that such society would be far more proper for a girl like her, than to read those abominable books. My goodness! That is awful!

ROSA. You don't mean to say that Stella knows better than I do?

BRAND. That is exactly what I mean. She has far more sense—'though, my dear Kitty, the is not so good looking as you——

ROSA. (*Aside.*) You forget, kitty can scratch. (*Aloud.*) Well, well, what do you think of that? I hope you are not in love with her.

BRAND. Don't get alarmed, my dear, I love only you——

ROSA. Yes, your manners prove it——

BRAND. How so?

ROSA. You neglect me in every way possible. When you come home evenings, you take your papers or your books and read, or you lie down on the sofa and sleep, instead of entertaining your wife——

BRAND. My dear, I cannot help that. Circumstances—the duties which are imposed upon a man nowadays are enough to make him a slave. A married man nowadays becomes a machine. All day he has

to contend with the ups and downs of business, and when he comes home, life is made a burden for him. All day, during the struggles in business, he worries how best to provide and make his better-half's life happy—who knows not and feels not the troubles of her husband; and when he comes home evenings, to enjoy his much-needed rest, she unreasonably expects him to entertain her. You expect too much, my dear child. (*Aside.*) If there only was anything to entertain. (*Aloud.*) Besides, can't you do a little yourself to occupy your mind? Read. Get acquainted with our authors. We have such beautiful literature.

ROSA. And what should I read?

BRAND. Goodness! What? There is a bookcase full of the very best works—and that represents only a very small part of what you could read——

ROSA. Pshaw! That is too dry! It is uninteresting, anyway——

BRAND. Well, then take up something else. There is so much for you to do around the house, or such a variety of fancy work to keep you busy, surely, it would not hurt you——

ROSA. Housework! You know I never had to do it, and I certainly won't do it now——

BRAND. By God! Look at Stella! There is a girl for you! It is a pleasure to watch her. She turns her hand to everything, and what she does, she does well. She does it willingly, and is not afraid of work.

ROSA. Oh, that is something she inherited. (*To* EMILIE.) You know, Emilie, her mother, before she was married, worked in a factory. Why, she was only a factory-girl, so what could you expect. That was born in her, and outside of that, what is she? She has not any manners. It is awful! There! It's one o'clock, and Stella isn't home yet. No, as long as I am mistress of this house, I won't stand for her disrespect. (*Rings.*)

BRAND. Don't you——

(LENA *enters.*)

LENA. Madam?

ROSA. You may set the table. (*Exit* LENA, *re-enters to set table. To* BRANDENFELLS.) What did you want to say?

BRAND. I don't want you to talk cross to Stella when she comes home——

ROSA. Consideration for that—beggar?

BRAND. (*Quietly and slowly.*) She is your niece as much as mine! She is my brother's child, remember!

ROSA. (*Agitated.*) Niece or no niece, she shall do as I say!

BRAND. Like everybody else around here, you mean to say? Be careful, I tell you.

ROSA. Abominable! And what is more—since that girl came into my house, you want to economize at my expense. It is three months now, since I have seen a drop of Port wine——

BRAND. And I hardly think you need any. You are just the picture of health——

ROSA. Gracious! I—not need any? I still get those fainting spells. Why, only this morning I was almost overcome. Isn't that so, Emilie?

EMILIE. (*Reluctantly.*) Y-e-s, Rosa nearly fainted this morning—while she was putting on her new waist——

ROSA. And it is not a bit too tight; but it was such an exertion for me——

BRAND. Hm—it's too bad about you! Well, if you do not feel well to-day, you will have to stay in the house, my dear—instead of going to your tea-party—or, wasn't that your intention?

EMILIE. Yes, we intended——

ROSA. Now you see! you even begrudge me that innocent little tea-party. (*Weeps.*) Oh, how unhappy I am!

EMILIE. Rosa, (*dignified*) control yourself——

BRAND. Tut, tut! Such stupidity! Didn't you say you didn't feel well? There was not the remotest idea of grudge——

EMILIE. (*Slowly.*) Alfred!

STELLA. (*Enter rather hastily.*) Good day, uncle, dear! And how are you, Aunty?

BRAND. Good day, my child. (*To* EMILIE.) Here, Emilie, is Stella—Karl's only daughter.

EMILIE. Good day, my child. (*Kisses her forehead.*) How are you? How are your parents?

STELLA. (*Sadly.*) My parents? Not very well. They have gone to strange lands—to starve.

EMILIE. Why, that is terrible! (*To* BRANDENFELLS.) But how did Karl meet with such reverses?

BRAND. How? Oh, dear! Don't you know Karl? He always was that—kind-hearted—but not very successful as a business man—and the rest you may conjecture.

ROSA. Not at all! I'll tell you, Emilie. He kindly assisted a Jew, and this is the lesson he learned.

BRAND. Of course, Jews again! There is nothing you could not blame on the Jews. It is true, he came to the assistance of this man, because he needed help, and he happened to be a Hebrew. Take the many instances where a Hebrew helps a Christian, and that is the last you hear about it. Even those that were benefited do not care to have anybody know that it was a Hebrew that assisted him—not even that he accepted help. But you go and turn about, and you won't hear the end of it. True, there are a lot of rogues amongst the Jews, but you find them just as bad and worse—amongst Christians——

ROSA. What you don't know about humanity——

EMILIE. But, for God's sake, can't you help your poor brother Karl?

BRAND. I should like to have done so; but I am in a rather difficult position myself, just now. Couldn't you do something for him? You have thousands at your command.

EMILIE. Yes, if I had only known. I gave two hundred and fifty dollars to the Church last week——

BRAND. You might have known that he could not be in very prosperous circumstances, else he would not have left his only child behind.

EMILIE. Isn't there an awful lot of misery amongst people——

BRAND. And that affects you so much? Why, then, must you help the priests?

EMILIE. But, Alfred, they ought to live as well as we do, shouldn't they? And see what they do for us——

ROSA. That is right, Emilie.

EMILIE. (*To* STELLA.) Come, my child, don't be so sad—come and sit by me. Our Lord won't forsake your parents. Trust in God, and all will be well. And how is your father?

STELLA. I do not know, Auntie.

BRAND. (*Aside.*) He lives on air, the poor fellow! Stingy old spinster! The fool that I was to hope for relief here!

ROSA. (*To* STELLA.) Well, and where was our young lady, that she came home so late?

Stella suddenly drops head on table—Lansky entering

STELLA. Excuse me, Auntie, we had been talking a while, and before we knew it, it was——

ROSA. And with whom, if I may ask.

STELLA. Mrs. Elsan.

ROSA. What? Do I hear? The one that works for your uncle? That sheenie woman?

EMILIE. Rosa! Rosa!

STELLA. But, Auntie, isn't she a woman, the same as any other?

ROSA. Hush! once and for all time—I won't have that. Jew is Jew! and I won't permit that you associate with such trash. I don't want you to have anything to do with Jews of any kind. (*To* EMILIE.) You know, aristocracy and people of the better class should have institutions where they could bring up their children properly, free from all influence of the lower class, and nobody should be allowed to see them, except relatives and near friends. Furthermore, girls should pledge themselves not to leave the institution under twenty-two years of age, or not until they are old enough to be married. That would prevent the evil influences of the lower class. What do you think about that, Emilie?

EMILIE. That would be a capital idea, Rosa! In my opinion, it won't be long before it will come to that. Children of the better class are too easily spoiled by the children of the working class. Besides, see how dangerous! You know these poor people have so many dreadful diseases. (*To* STELLA.) May God protect you from such people!

ROSA. (*To* STELLA.) You should remember that, never to associate with a person, who is a—— (*To* EMILIE.) Well, Emilie, you know what I mean——

BRAND. For goodness' sake! keep your views to yourself! And you, Rosa, will you please keep quiet! This stupid hatred against Jews—people whom you don't know at all, so ridiculous!

ROSA. I? I should not know what they are? At home, as a little child, I heard my parents speak about them——

BRAND. That is just it! You always hear—but don't know it yourself.

ROSA. What! How dare you say that to me! I? With the best of education and the best of schooling that I had? Where the servants came flying when I uttered a wish——

BRAND. Go on, Rosa! Don't try to make me believe—— How often did you help your mother milk the cow?

ROSA. I? I? Well, and if I did—I didn't have to do it. I did it out of my own free will——

BRAND. And your mother——?

ROSA. That is none of your business!

EMILIE. Rosa, be moderate——

BRAND. (*Rises in anger.*) You are an ignorant goose!

ROSA. I shall resent your mean insinuations. (*Stamping her foot.*) And, Stella, once for all—I don't want to see you again with that woman. People in the neighborhood must think we are friends with those Jews. I will be ashamed to go out of the house.

BRAND. (*Nervous.*) Enough of the Jews now, I tell you. It was a Jew that helped me to my feet with cold cash, and if it had not been for him, you might to-day be taking in washing——

ROSA. I! Take in washing! How low! The idea! You married me, and it is your duty to see that I have the comforts I should have.

BRAND. Yes, my duty. I have all the obligations, and you have none——

ROSA. And then you take a girl in the house—a girl like that. She does as she pleases, and you assist her in every possible manner, instead of to see to it that she obeys me.

BRAND. Don't drive me to desperation, I tell you! Why don't you shut up now?

ROSA. Take Mr. Lange, he is a man—a gentleman! See his manners! Never a harsh word, always considerate—and how courteous!

BRAND. How is it possible? You are ignorance personified. Little you know the kind of a man he is.

ROSA. And you are rudeness personified! You are low—mean!

BRAND. Woman, do you want to drive me out of my home? Nothing but trouble in business, all day; and when I come home, you bother the life out of me—enough to drive anybody crazy. (*Jumps up, paces the floor, suddenly laughing hoarsely.*) And that is happiness of married life! (*Continues, more to himself.*) One marries a woman of so-called good family; supposed to be virtuous and well-bred. From childhood she is taught that a woman's mission is to be the wife of some man, whose duty it will be to coddle her, and play with her,

and most important of all, will support her—thus looking upon marriage as a maintenance, or a charitable institution, and as she thus fulfilled her mission, she ceases to strive—to develop her mind. She becomes an ornament, instead of being a true companion of the man she wedded.

ROSA. Well, what am I married for? I'd like to know?

BRAND. (*Interrupting her angrily.*) Be quiet. (*In disgust.*) Of course! What for? If a man comes home to get his much needed rest, his wife seeks pleasure. She wants to go out, wants to be entertained! Has he reverses in business troubling his mind? She comes to worry him with unpaid dressmakers' and other bills, and on top of all that, nasty reproaches. The honey-moon over, she bores him with jealousy. It is disgusting——

ROSA. Oh, well! I could have married another man where I would have been free from cares—instead of marrying a clod, a man that hasn't the least breeding, and learning——

BRAND. That is enough now! No more of it! That is more than I can stand. (*Goes to his desk, putting something into his pocket.*)

(*Exit* BRANDENFELLS, *very excited.*)

ROSA. Alfred! (*After him to the door.*) Alfred! What are you going to do? Where are you going?

BRAND. (*Through the open door.*) To hell!

STELLA. Uncle! Uncle, dear! (STELLA *follows him through the door.* ROSA *runs about the room terrified, while* EMILIE *laments.*)

ROSA. My God! I'll go crazy! Why all this? Why all these quarrels? Is it not enough that I have to put up with unruly servants? And all on account of this girl! My home is wrecked, I am miserable, unhappy—— (*Loud exclamations from another room.* ROSA *sinks into a chair, unnerved.*)

STELLA'S VOICE. (*Through the door.*) Uncle! Uncle! (*Report of a revolver is heard.* EMILIE, *who has tried to comfort* ROSA, *jumps up, upsetting table, shouting.*)

EMILIE. Lena, Lena! Help, help! Something terrible has happened.

(*Two women come running in, lamenting and wringing their hands.*)

FIRST WOMAN. Oh, Mrs. Brandenfells! Mrs. Brandenfells! What has happened?

ROSA. (*Sinks back into her chair, exclaiming.*) My husband has shot himself! He has shot himself! Oh, it is terrible! My God, help me! Forgive him his sins, God Almighty! (*Wringing her hands.*) Alfred, my Alfred.

(STELLA *and* LENA *appear in the door terrified.*)

STELLA. Auntie, would you please——

ROSA. Out of my eyes, you wretch! You are the cause of it—you —you—— Lena run for the doctor!

SECOND WOMAN. But what has happened?

ROSA. Oh, had I never seen her! She is the cause of all this! How happy we could have been, if she had never entered this house! Oh, I am ruined! My God! My God!

BOTH WOMEN. Impossible! Is it possible! Why, see the kind of people she associates with!

(ROSA *laments.* LENA *enters.*)

LENA. Please, madam, doctor is here!

(ROSA *rises, with the assistance of the two women, who take her to the door.*)

ROSA. (*Piteously.*) Alfred! Alfred!

(*The two women remain,* ROSA *exit.*)

FIRST WOMAN. The poor woman! How she takes it to heart! See what caused all this trouble. I am not surprised at it—the company she keeps. They say that Elsan woman is not even married to the man she lives with——

SECOND WOMAN. Such people should not be allowed to associate with anybody.

FIRST WOMAN. And Mrs. Brandenfells is such a good woman——

(LENA *enters, weeping.*)

SECOND WOMAN. Tell me, Lena, is it really as bad as all that?

LENA. Yes, he is dead. Oh, oh! (*Weeps.*)

SECOND WOMAN. Heavens! what a calamity! Take care of Mrs. Brandenfells, Lena, she takes it so awfully hard!

ACT III

SCENE: Workshop. Tables in right-hand corner, rolls of cloth piled up, towards front a desk, towards center a stove, along side of which is a pile of wood. A door in left-hand corner leads into Jutta's room. (Caretaker's room.) Another door, entrance to shop.

TIME: 6 o'clock A. M.

(JUTTA *enters. Starts fire. Br-r-r-*)

JUTTA. How wise this world is managed, hardly enough to eat. Is it a wonder one freezes?

SAM. (*From* JUTTA'S *room.*) Jutta, Jutta, coffee is boiling over.

JUTTA. My, how brave you are—ha! ha! ha! You better not touch that can, you burn your fingers—ha! ha! ha! (*Runs into her room.*)

SELKOFSKY. (*Enters, hangs up hat and coat, turns toward* JUTTA'S *room.*) Good morning. Are you up so soon? (*Goes to stove to warm himself.*)

JUTTA. (*In the door.*) Good morning, Mat. My! you up early. You fall out of bed?

SAM. (*In other room.*) Ha, ha, ha. You've never seen his bed, have you? Big enough for a family. (*Enters shop.*) You smelt that coffee, hey? (*Shakes hands with Selkofsky.*) Bring the coffee in here Jutta, it's warmer here, and we must save coal, my friend.

(JUTTA *brings coffeepot, cups, bread and molasses.*)

SAM. Say, Mat, what time have you got?

SELKOFSKY. It's a little after six.

JUTTA. (*While she pours out the coffee.*) Everybody up so early this morning. My! I hardly sleep a wink all night. (*Sighs. All sit down to breakfast.*)

SELKOFSKY. Yes, I was uneasy too. Who would have thought it—a house like Brandenfells' to come to such an end?

JUTTA. And Brandenfells was a good man.

SAM. He was too good. But, Mat, why don't you say something ? You must have news, you never come over so early.

SELKOFSKY. So I have. Say, Sam, haven't you noticed something strange about Bachmann?

SAM. I notice a lot of things. He is very kind and I believe he is a friend of the workingmen.

SELKOFSKY. Do you know that he is well off?

SAM. He is that; but why does he work? He is only taking bread and butter from somebody else.

JUTTA. You just watch. He is laying for Lange.

SAM. I hope he does. A fellow like Lange should be hung up by his heels. They ought to take him and cut him to pieces, and break every bone in his body.

SELKOFSKY. There you are again. The same old Sam. You'd string them all up if you could.

JUTTA. That's all right. You don't know Lange.

SAM. Yes, Mat, you don't know half of the misery in this world. You should go through what I have, you would judge different. You ought to see for yourself. Say, do you remember Dave, you know the one who went to school with us ?

SELKOFSKY. Oh, yes. He was a smart fellow. I remember.

SAM. You remember when he drew your picture? He was only twelve years old.

SELKOFSKY. (*Nodding.*) Hm—Hm——

SAM. You know what became of him? A boy like Dave?

SELKOFSKY. Well?

SAM. He was only fourteen when his mother died, and he had to keep his two sisters. Now, what do you think—a boy—to earn a living for the family! Poor kid! He had to work hard. Then he got a job as presser, and when his sisters grew up, he married. On the side, he always daubed and drew pictures, you know. He got quite an artist, they say. All at once he disappeared. That was four weeks ago. He left his wife to care for the two kids.

JUTTA. Isn't that terrible!

SELKOFSKY. I didn't think he would be such a coward.

SAM. I don't call that a coward. If he was a coward in one thing, he was not in another. He was true to himself—can't you see that? He did what he thought was right. He loved art so much, and loved

it more than everything else. Had he stayed by his family he would have neglected himself.

SELKOFSKY. Say what you like—he was a coward——

JUTTA. And what with his family?

SAM. His family? Who is responsible for family? Society! If conditions were different, he might have followed his art, and have his family all the same. She tells me that she and the two kids have to live on twenty-five cents a day. You call that justice? Look at the people that call themselves the upper Four Hundred! They have so much they get sick from it—and we get sick because we haven't got enough. If I could only do as I'd like to——

SELKOFSKY. You may be right, as far as society is concerned; but I do not believe that your way of changing conditions would be the proper way. I believe Bachmann's system is far better. And as to destroying one's family to attain one's object, as Dave did, no matter what conditions exist, or how great his talent, no man is justified to demand such sacrifices from his fellowmen, much less from his helpless children—his own flesh and blood. As a unit in the universe, he, by himself is of too little importance, and, with justice to all, there can be no privileges for any one.

SAM. (*Struggling with the expression.*) Well, from your standpoint you may be right, but how can a man elevate his mind? How can he ever reach his ideals? He must not look right or left, neither behind him. His highest aim, and his only aim must be to reach spiritual perfection.

SELKOFSKY. Ah! if we could ever accomplish that! But you forget that after all we are only human beings, and as such, descended from the animal, which it takes all our power of self-control to conquer. Never will we reach spiritual perfection, so long as we are human. And as such we have no right to ask or even accept sacrifices. Only after attaining perfectness in the flesh can we expect to become spiritually perfect.

SAM. Hm—You'll have to give me time to think that over. Hm—(*suddenly*) but what about Bachmann's system? You think that he will stay, since Brandenfells is dead?

SELKOFSKY. I don't know, Sam. You know he does not say much—he generally acts, and whatever he has undertaken so far has been successful.

SAM. Think so? Time will show. But can't you tell me what his system will be?

SELKOFSKY. Bachmann thinks that the workingmen in America are far more advanced.

SAM. Then he wants to go to America?

JUTTA. To America!

SELKOFSKY. I am not quite sure; but I believe that is his idea. He is thoroughly disgusted with our system of police and military government.

SAM. Military? Well, now, Selk! He does not know much about our soldiers, then. I tell you, if a revolution should break out to-day most of them would shoot in the air.

SELKOFSKY. You are mistaken, Sam. You don't know what they can do. They simply have to shoot.

SAM. You don't say! Don't you believe for a moment that they would shoot their brothers, to please the brutes that rule our country! No, no, Max, you want to get up a little earlier. But what about your system?

SELKOFSKY. Well, I'll tell you: but you don't want to get excited, if our views differ from yours.

SAM. Never mind, Max, I won't say much. I'll think my part. Dig right in. I'm anxious to know what two smart fellows like you have invented. Ha—ha—ha——

SELKOFSKY. You can laugh all you want! Well, first of all, we would form a society in New York.

JUTTA. So he really is going to America?

SAM. Don't disturb him! You listen a while, now, else we might sit here till morning.

SELKOFSKY. Now, all those that earn money subscribe to a general fund, say for about ten years; by that time we'll have money enough to buy up enough land in the West to lay out farms and a city of our own.

SAM. A city of our own! Well, well——

SELKOFSKY. Yes, and where everybody will have a home of his own—with enough room for everybody, and more——

SAM. A home of his own!

SELKOFSKY. We then build our own factories and manufacture all

What is this? How does this get here

we need for ourselves, and not a bit more. There will be no bosses, and no parasites. All will be on an equal footing.

SAM. But how are you going to control all that? You can't let everybody do as he pleases.

SELKOFSKY. Of course, we will have to have somebody at the head of it, and we will have to have law and order, to punish those that try to take advantage of their fellowmen. Outside of that, everybody can do as he pleases. Anybody that does not want to work will have to do without food.

SAM. (*Sarcastically.*) Well, I don't see that differs very much from a capitalistic state. How are you going to supply food; and are you going to have these round pieces of metal what we call money ?

SELKOFSKY. Merit and ability will always maintain their value and preference——

SAM. So, those that know more than the rest of them, get more, too——?

SELKOFSKY. Of course. Life must be worth living, and those that accomplish more must be rewarded. Our greatest reward will be retirement from manual labor. After that, a man is provided for, for the rest of his life, and he can do absolutely as he pleases, provided he doesn't interfere with the liberties of his fellowmen.

SAM. Do you call that treating everybody alike?

SELKOFSKY. This treatment may not seem alike, but in justice to everybody the rights of each individual will be closely guarded. What a man accumulates as a worker, will be for his own benefit, and he himself will enjoy the fruits thereof. When he dies he leaves nothing—but his memory. Should he have a creative, artistic mind, his works would become an endowment to the community and to posterity The outside world will also be able to partake of the products of our work in return for whatever might be useful to us. Of course, mistakes will be made, as long as we remain human, but such mistakes shall be treated humanely, and it shall be our main effort to educate our coming generation to the best of our ability, and I have no doubt, if harmony prevails, we shall in a number of generations reach human perfection as near as possible——

SAM. Well, that, of course, sounds very good. Individual independence is what we are striving for—and you are working somewhat

towards it. But, Mat, I don't know, I don't think you will ever see the day. I don't care much for your plan, because you are going at it too slow. Besides, it would be a small part of humanity, anyway, and but few, comparatively, would benefit by it. What's the use of dickering with society, as long as we know what we want? What do we need a leader for, if we all hold one opinion to one purpose? Down with those that dare to oppose us, and once all obstacles are removed, we all will have reached very soon, what a few of you expect to reach some distant day——

SELKOFSKY. And do you think, that is so easily done? You may use force, but will it avail you of anything?

SAM. Of course, you must not mind a little spilling of blood. A few miserable human beings don't count for much, and once we have shown them that we mean business, they will stop opposing us and join our ranks. See that?

SELKOFSKY. Sam, have you ever seen anybody convineed by force? Go back to the middle ages. Go back to the time of the Spanish inquisition. How much both innocaent nd guilty blood was spilt? Yet, with the thousands and thousands of victims, it could not stop progress. Some day, there will be a time when our present system is forgotten, but you cannot force nature——

SAM. Maybe, Mat. I can't see it that way. Sorry——

SELKOFSKY. Then you won't go with us?

SAM. I'm sorry, Mat, I cannot. Let me be true to my principles. And if I cannot convince you, well, then I wish you good luck.

SELKOFSKY. You'll be true to your principles if it costs you your head.

SAM. (*Shrugging his shoulders.*) Perhaps! Can't help it!

SELKOFSKY. I am sorry, Sam. An intelligent fellow as you are! I'd like to have had you with us.

SAM. I am glad to know you are my friend. One thing you must promise me, let us remain friends.

SELKOFSKY. (*Extending his hand.*) My hand, Sam. Come what may, we'll always remain friends.

SAM. Very well, then, Mat.

JUTTA. What do you think of Mrs. Brandenfells now? What do you think she will do?

SAM. What do other people do?

JUTTA. But she is left in reduced circumstances.

SAM. Well, then, let her work.

JUTTA. But, Sam, you know she has never been used to work.

SAM. Well, then, she'll learn it. She is stronger than you and Miss Stella together——

JUTTA. Besides that, she has got heart trouble, and if she had had to work before this, she would hardly be living——

SELKOFSKY. That's what she said——

JUTTA. What she said——

SAM. That what she said? Ha—ha—ha! Then it must be so! And did you tell her that the doctor said you should not work, and that you are spitting blood for over a year?

JUTTA. But she is a woman with education, and her hands are not used to work.

SAM. Then let her work her brains. Do you think her mind and her heart are as delicate as her hands?

SELKOFSKY. Don't worry about Mrs. Brandenfells. Bachmann offered her help, but she proudly refused. Besides Brandenfells knew what he was doing, and if nothing else, there is the insurance for her. She refused Bachmann's help because he was a Jew.

JUTTA. Too proud! And because he was a Jew?

SAM. I guess she is right. Ha—ha! Money that comes from a Jew is not looked upon as clean. But, you bet, if she had really needed it, she would not have hesitated. She would have soon overlooked his money being unclean. I'm only sorry for Miss Stella. The poor girl wants to do what is right, but I am afraid she is not strong enough to make her way in this hard world.

SELKOFSKY. She lost in her uncle a good advisor. She will always know what is right.

SAM. That is just why—don't you see, Mat? With her good sense and her kind heart, people will laugh at her when she administers justice. Laugh! Have you ever been laughed at? Have you ever felt the humiliation of sarcasm? If she was mine, I would end her life——

JUTTA. Sam! Sam!

SELKOFSKY. Why you would kill her?

SAM. Why? Because of what she will have to suffer—suffer at the hands of the unscrupulous brutes——

(*Voices are heard outside.*)

SELKOFSKY. (*Looking at his watch.*) It is already seven o'clock.

(JUTTA *and* SAM *carry table into other room.*)

SAM. You see if I'm not right. She will not be able to fight through life.

(JUTTA *exit* *Enter twenty workmen—ten Hebrews and eight Christians—and two apprentices. One after another the workmen enter, take their places, rubbing their eyes, and stretching themselves, shaking the rain from their coats and hats.*)

KOLLER. There's a beautiful day again.

KRUSE. Ba! Good for ducks.

HINTSE. And now to work again.

LINDE. You must be working for glory, the way you like it.

HINTSE. Not exactly for glory. But there is one thing—you don't have to think very hard when you work.

KRUSE. Say! Did you hear? Brandenfells is really dead. Nobody seems to know whether he shot himself or if somebody else did it.

HINTSE. He shot himself.

KRUSE. How do you know?

HINTSE. I heard Lange say so.

KOLLER. (*Sarcastically.*) If Lange says so, it must be so.

HINTSE. I beg your pardon, my dear sir. Lange is too much of a gentleman to tell a lie.

KOLLER. Yes, you are right. He's too much of a gentleman. He only prevaricates.

HINTSE. I like your insinuations. We ought to be glad that something else did not happen.

KOLLER. What do you mean?

HINTSE. We can thank our stars that Lange didn't commit suicide instead of Brandenfells.

DOHRING. What did you say? Eh? You hypocrite, you!

HINTSE. You better not say that again. Everybody knows that we had to thank Brandenfells for the reduction every year.

DOHRING. What! Are you blind? Can't you see that Lange is pulling the wool over your eyes?

HINTSE. I don't think! I know Brandenfells was a man——

DOHRING. It is only since Lange is here that we are driven like dogs. He is the scoundrel. And you are the biggest mutton-head I have ever run across, if you can't see that——

HINTSE. (*Raises his fist.*) None of your lip now, or I'll hand you one that your chin will be flying around your ears.

KOLLER. Don't get excited, Mister, you might hurt yourself After all, you are a pretty good natured old fool.

(HINTSE *goes for him, when* BACHMANN *enters.*)

BACHMANN. Keep quiet, now, boys. We'll soon have a performance without you making one.

(*Pause for a moment.*)

SCHULSE. There! These fellows run him down, and are only too glad to work for him.

MULLER. They don't know what they want, anyway. When they get their money Saturdays, they go and blow it all in, and when it's gone, they start ripping him up the back——

(*Woman with bundle enters.*)

BACHMANN. That belongs upstairs, Mrs. Mayer. You can come down afterwards and get your money. (*To* SELKOFSKY.) Take a dozen No. 18 and three dozen No 24 and send it up. What order are you working on, Isidor?

ISIDOR. I. B. 82.

BACHMANN. That's right. I'm waiting for it. (*Exit* BACHMANN.)

SCHMIDT (*To* MULLER.) Did you hear—Lange subscribed three hundred dollars for the missions in India?

SAM. India? India? With all the misery in the town, they send thousands and thousands to India, and people here can go without bread——

ISIDOR. That's it—what you call social conditions—you understand?

DOHRING. Hurrah, Isi—open your mouth for once. That's what they sometimes call Christianity.

SCHMIDT. You ought to be ashamed of yourself, to talk like that as a Christian.

DOHRING. My dear friend, no religion has ever helped me any. My boy is a cripple, because I could not pay for a doctor, and no Christian took pity on him.

MULLER. Perhaps you soaked all your money?

DOHRING. Soaked! With nine dollars a week, and a family of seven, there's not much left to spend in drink.

MULLER. I haven't got that much, and save out of it——

ISIDOR. A mule can live on less——

MULLER. What did you say? (SCHMIDT *jerks him with his elbow.*)

ISIDOR. That you are full of prunes.

MULLER. (*Rises excitedly, while others laugh.*) You sheenies have more gall than bed bugs.

SCHMIDT. I told you to keep your face shut. You'll never get the best of a Jew.

SCHULSE. That's right, Bert, one Jew is as smart as ten Christians.

SAM. Yes, it takes a lot of brains for it——

MULLER. You got all your brains in your nose.

SAM. And you in your fist.

SCHMIDT. Oh, shut your face. You want to argue with those sheenies, and besides (*points at* SAM) he thinks he knows it all, anyway.

LINDE. You are scared of that fellow, eh? He can beat you all. He knows what he is talking about. (*To* SAM.) That's all right, Sam.

SAM. Shake, my friend. (*Offering his hand.*) I, hope you are one of us.

LINDE. I can't. As much as I'd like to, I have too much responsibility.

SAM. Too bad. One less.

HINTSE. (*Pointing at* LINDE.) Just look at him, will you? I didn't think that scare-crow could count five.

MULLER. I suppose he knows what he is talking about. (*Rests.*) My God! I'd rather work fifteen hours, if I didn't have to work amongst these Jews. (BACHMANN *enters.*)

BACHMANN. (*Who heard him.*) Remember, my dear man, that I am a Jew.

MULLER. I didn't mean you, Mr. Bachmann. If they were all like you, I wouldn't mind.

LINDE. (*Aside.*) His bread and butter.

SAM. (*Aside.*) Such cowards, what they are.

BACHMANN. I am afraid you are mistaken. You don't know me yet——

(JUTTA *enters with a number of envelopes*.)

JUTTA. (*To* BACHMANN.) Mr. Lange say he no pay anodder cent.

BACHMANN. All the better. He'll meet me half way.

(MRS. MAYER *enters,* JUTTA *offers her a chair, saying a few pleasant words to her.*)

JUTTA. (*To* BACHMANN.) Anyding else you want me to do, Mr. Bachmann?

BACHMANN. No, Mrs. Elsan. I'll see him myself.

(JUTTA *exit.*)

BACHMANN. (*To the men.*) Men, you all know I returned your money to Mr. Lange, on account of the ten per cent reduction in your wages. Here it is again. I guess that reduction stands. You hear, Mrs Mayer? After this you have to be content with five dollars forty cents instead of six dollars.

MRS. MAYER. I no can work for the money, Mr. Bachmann. I not yet pay my rent. No make enough money.

MULLER. I'm satisfied.

HINTSE. So am I.

SCHMIDT. So am I.

SCHULSE. And I.

BACHMANN. Well, then, here's your money. (*Turning to the others.*) Boys, don't take that money!

(IKE *and five women enter.*)

IKE. Mr. Bachmann, I see Mr. Lange yesterday and asked him for my money, and he——

BACHMANN. And did you get it?

IKE. He no give it to me. And he asked me——

BACHMANN. All right. I'll see that you get it.

SAM. Let's strike, fellows, if we can't get our money. (*Drops his tools and rises. Several join him.*)

SEVERAL. Yes, we'll strike! Let's strike!

ONE OF THEM. If we can't get it in peace, we'll fight for it.

SAM. Drop your work, boys.

HINTSE. Why? I don't care. I'm satisfied.

STRIKERS. Down with the work, when we tell you——

SAM. As long as we are here, nobody will do another stroke——

HINTSE. We certainly got in a hell of a crowd. Why! they're anarchists.

MULLER and SCHMIDT. Anarchists!

BACHMANN. Easy, gentlemen. Anarchists are not cannibals.

MULLER. For God's sake——

SCHULSE. (*Pointing to* LINDE *and* DOHRING.) Those two are socialists, I know.

MULLER. Anarchists or socialists, all the same they are not fit to feed to the hogs.

BACHMANN. You had better keep your mouth shut. You only give yourself away and show your ignorance.

SCHULSE. We read and hear enough of it. They don't chase them all over for nothing! In Germany and other places, they fire 'em out as soon as they get ahold of them. Nobody wants them.

SCHMIDT. Why can't they do everything openly?

BACHMANN. Why? Because they cannot. Because——

SCHULSE. Because they can't! That's just why——

MULLER. (*Poking him with his elbow.*) Why don't you let him talk. Let's hear what he's got to say——

SCHULSE. (*Pushes* MULLER *aside.*) Oh, let me go! We would like to—to—and because we would like to and we can't—that's why we got to be satisfied. I'd rather take a dry crust than no bread at all. The idea. Anarchism! Ha—ha—ha! Ain't it ridiculous? A lot crazy notions that will never be, and only make a whole lot of us miserable.

LINDE. You are waking up, ain't you? Anarchism is more than you can swallow, and now you are going nutty over it——

SCHULSE. Shut up, you cabbage head, or I'll give you a rap across the face.

MULLER. Go on, Bill, go on!

SCHULSE. You have all kinds of promises about the Golden Land. (*Sarcastically.*) Take, for instance, your free love. (*Coughs uneasy.*)

SAM. That's all he can say——

DOHRING. His tongue is getting twisted.

SCHULSE. Wouldn't that be nice? Now we can love only one, then we could love them all. No, fellows, that bait won't do for me. If I can't be better off, I stay where I am. As long as we can get our feed, what do we care?

SCMHIDT, MULLER and HINTSE. Good for Bill! That's right, Bill!

Lansky kneeling at side of Stella's coffin

SAM. Too bad about him. He should have been an orator.

LINDE. He's getting softening of the brain——

BACHMANN. My dear fellow, I believe you wanted to say something, but don't know—what—you must have heard something somewheres.

DOHRING. The darn fools. You ought to get twenty-five lashes every morning and night.

KOLLER. They ought to smash them blockheads. Perhaps they'll begin to think a little more——

HINTSE. Darn you! We won't stand for that! (*Rolls up his sleeves and darts towards* SAM.)

SCHULSE. What's the matter with you? That ain't the one!

HINTSE. You can't fool me, that's the leader all right.

KOLLER. Easy, easy, my dear sir. A little fresh air might do you good. (HINTSE, MULLER *and* SCHMIDT *are forcibly ejected.* SCHULSE *has taken cover in the background.*)

SCHULSE. One never knows what you dogs are up to. You are pretty sly, ain't you? It's a good thing we have police. Eat and booze, that's what you like; but work——

DOHRING. Close your trap, you——

BACHMANN. Don't bother with him——

SAM. Fire him out! (SCHULSE *is ejected.*) Now we'll go and demand our rights.

SEVERAL. And if we don't get it.

SAM. We must, we must, and if we don't, he can pick up his bones from the floor.

BACHMANN. Don't be rash, Sam. Don't you see that you cannot do anything this way? We have enough examples. Have you ever succeeded with Anarchism?

DOHRING. See how Anarchism has grown during the last fifty years.

BACHMANN. To be suppressed the world over——

SAM. That's right. And the more it is suppressed the stronger it grows.

BACHMANN. Tell me, boys, what have you accomplished so far? You kill one, and another takes his place. What is the difference? Conditions have turned you into revengeful beasts. Your demands are just and right, but the course you follow is foolish. Is it a wonder the world turns against you? Choose a more humane course, to accomplish your purpose.

KOLLER. Hang the highwaymen. That's all they are, and all they deserve.

BACHMANN. There are other ways, in which to secure justice more quickly. (SAM *shakes his head.* BACHMANN *walks up and down.*)

KRUSE. What good is all our enthusiasm, our hatred of our oppressors, if we roam about unorganized, without a level-headed man to lead us to success?

BACHMANN. (*Stops.*) Let me tell you, boys, there is only one thing that can save you, that is this (*pulls out roll of bills*). (BACHMANN *continues to pace up and down.* LINDE *approaches* SAM, *exchange some words, shake their heads, then shake hands.* LINDE *exit.*)

BACHMANN. (*Stops again.*) Boys, I'll lead you——

SEVERAL. What? What? You, Mr. Bachmann? Hurrah! Hurrah! Three cheers for our leader.

BACHMANN. Now, listen. The next thing we do, we leave this country. We go to America, where we are free men. There, we'll commence all over again. I'll go right now to make the necessary arrangements. In an hour I'll be back, and I hope you'll all be ready to follow me. (BACHMANN *exit.*)

JEWS. (*Start to sing.*)

"Ho, for America—
Where the streets are paved with gold—
Where nobody jeers and jars us—
Where in justice the Jew may toil—
Give us a little slice of mother earth—
Where a Jew can make his home—
To eat and drink around his frugal hearth,
Where he can call his life his own.
Ho, for America!"

(*While they sing,* LANGE *enters enraged.*)

LANGE. What's all this? What does that mean? Be careful, I tell you. Brandenfells is no more. Now I am boss. Sam, you get out at once. Get out, I tell you. There are hundreds who are glad to take your job.

SAM. No, sir, he does not have to. He goes of his own free will.

(LANGE *looks surprised.*)

ALL. We are all going.

LANGE. Scoundrels! This is how you thank me for feeding you all these years.

SEVERAL. What about our labor and health we sacrificed for you?

LANGE. Wait; I'll spoil your plans for once. (*Tries to leave the room.* IKE *intercepts him.*)

IKE. Don't be in a hurry, my good man! My wife dead, and I have no more to lose. Now, how much money you owe me. I want you give it to me.

OTHERS. We all want our money!

LANGE. Beasts! (*Noise outside.* LANGE *trembling, all listen.*)

JUTTA. (*Enters in a fit.*) Sam! Sam! (*Pointing to* LANGE.) This wretch! Oh, this wretch! (*Sits in a chair lamenting.*)

SAM and SELKOFSKY. (*Perplexed.*) What is it? What is it?

SAM. (*Running towards her.*) What's the trouble? What is it? (LANGE *tries to get to the door. Several hold him back, threatening him with scissors, etc.*)

DOHRING. You stay right here, you follower of Christ! Your day of reckoning has come!

SEVERAL. Give him what he deserves! Lynch him! Hang him!

LANGE. You dogs, you——!

SAM. (*Steps up to* LANGE.) A poor, defenceless woman, though you despise her and her dogs, was a welcome morsel to satisfy your lust. Come here, you scoundrel!

LANGE. Let me go! Let me go! You shall all have your money!

SAM. Don't want your money! Come here, or I'll stick these shears into you!

(LANGE *steps trembling up to* SAM. *Thunder and lightning outside.*)

LANGE. The Day of Judgment has overtaken you! See the lightning! Do you hear the thunder? The Lord will punish you!

KRUSE, DOHRING and KOLLER. Hypocrite! Shame!

SAM. May the day come! Yours is here! If the lightning strikes anybody, it will be you, you villain! (*Slaps his face.*)

SEVERAL. Hang him! Kill him!

SAM. Don't you know me, scoundrel? Do you remember when you carried on your dirty work?

LANGE. You? (*Enraged towards* SAM.) You, who gave me that reception of rotten eggs?

SAM. And you low-down blackguard, who did your best to incite the world against the Jews. It was for Brandenfells that I kept the peace! Now I'll have my revenge.

LANGE. Don't be revengeful. Some day you will have to answer for it. Be generous. All I have is yours! Have mercy!

SAM. Why should we care to show you mercy? We will finish the good work you have started, and deliver our fellowmen of their oppressor by sending you into the next world. Here, boys, you have just cause to satisfy your vengeance. Hang him! The outcast of humanity!

LANGE. You are responsible for my life! Don't kill me! Don't! Don't!

SAM. A good Christian! Ha—ha!—that is afraid to step before his Creator. Haven't you done your duty as a good Christian? Haven't you tried to rid whole cities and countries of the despicable Jews? Haven't you forced thousands of families into misery and starvation? Haven't you torn the father from his children, and the husband from his loving wife, because he was a Jew? Those wounds you have torn are still fresh. Listen, you coward! Listen to what I tell you! The tears of your innocent victims cry for revenge! (*Holds his hands before his eyes.*) Wounds that will never heal! (LANGE *tries to escape.*) Your efforts are useless! Listen! Not satisfied with your contemptible desires and successes in Europe, you crossed the seas, to continue your crimes in distant lands. I followed you, step by step. I swore you should not escape me. (LANGE *tries frantically to free himself.*) Never mind, you villain! Your time has come! (LANGE *laments.*) We'd rather go to the gallows than let you live. Console yourself, sooner or later fate would have overtaken you. Take care of him, men, and give him his medicine.

(*The men crowd around* LANGE, *who cries pitifully, put a rope around his neck and throw him from the window. Immediately Chief three police officers and* SCHULSE *enter.*)

KRUSE. Cops! Look out! I told you Schulse was a sucker!

CHIEF. In the name of the law, you are my prisoners. (*To the officers.*) Arrest them and put them in irons.

FIRST OFFICER. Which one?

CHIEF. Any one of them! That one, there!

OFFICER. Never! That's my best friend. He's all right! (*Some try to escape.*)

CHIEF. Stand, or I'll fire! (*To the officers.*) Do your duty, officers!

OFFICERS. What? Our brothers? They haven't done us any wrong!

CHIEF. Are you crazy? Do as I command you. (*Pulls his revolver, while the officers cover him.* CHIEF *paralyzed with fear.* SAM *laughs scornfully.*)

DOHRING. It is a good thing we have police, eh, Schulse?

OFFICERS. Au revoir. (*Exeunt.*)

ACT IV

Scene 1.

Scene: Charity office, New York. In center a long desk, to the right, bookcases and five chairs. A railing dividing the room in half. In front of rail, on both sides, a bench.

(Berger, *man about thirty, bookkeeper, at his desk. Office boy at the window plays with shade.* Stella *enters, large paper box on her arm.*)

Stella. Pardon, me, sir, could I please see the gentleman in charge?

Berger. You are speaking to him now.

Stella. Could I please ask your assistance?

Berger. What is your want?

Stella. I feel very sick. I have consumption. The doctor told me I could not live much longer if I stayed here.

Berger. And what is it you want? What do you want me to do?

Stella. I would like to ask you if you could not please help me to get transportation.

Berger. Any Tom, Dick and Harry might come here and ask that.

Stella. But I assure you, sir.

Berger. Yes, we know all about that. Soon people would come here and ask us to make a trip around the world. This is not a tourist office. We help, and we help willingly, but only where it is really called for.

Stella. I assure you, sir, I must get away from here. The doctor says I may not live another three months here.

Berger. Why, then, don't you work, until you have enough money together?

Stella. I work as much as I possibly can, but everything goes to the doctor and for medicine. Could I hope, sir?

Berger. I've told you once before. This is not a tourist office. There are other cases, as for instance, widows with six or seven children.

STELLA. I believe you, sir. But there are people who would like to, but cannot, work.

BERGER. (*Shrugging his shoulders.*) If it's work you want, I might get you a position as servant; and outside of a few groceries, and a night's lodging, I'm afraid we cannot do anything for you.

STELLA. I am working all I possibly can. For God's sake, what shall I do? For two weeks now I have tried to get a little assistance. Have you no pity?

BERGER. Have you no relatives or friends who could help you? A pretty girl like you——

STELLA. Sir. I have nobody. The woman who has taken pity on me has barely enough for herself.

BERGER. Well, the best we could do for you would be a half-fare ticket. Where do you want to go?

STELLA. To Colorado, sir.

BERGER. That would be about thirty-two dollars.

STELLA. I haven't a cent, sir. Where, for heaven's sake, could I get so much money? Beg, I cannot; and steal, I must not. What shall I do? Tell me.

(*Pause*—BERGER *looks at his watch.*)

BERGER. Well, then, I suppose you'll have to work until you get the money. (*Takes his hat. To boy.*) I am going out to lunch, Frank.

BOY. All right. (*Takes his place at the desk.*)

STELLA. Is that all, sir?

BERGER. That's all. (*Exit* BERGER.)

STELLA. (*On her way out notices sign of* CHARITY OFFICE.) What mockery! To the weary and sick this sign stands out like a beautiful dream, as a last hope, at last to have found a human soul who will have pity on the sufferings of the poor, miserable wretches! And to your mind comes the beautiful legend of the good Samaritan, and the sublime teachings of Christ, to alleviate your pains and sorrows; only to find that these letters are meaningless—dead. And who knows how many unfortunate souls have shattered their last hopes on these golden letters, that lead to ruin, only to lose all faith in humanity and perhaps end their worldly troubles! Oh, God! My God! When will light dawn upon us? When will darkness subside and these deceitful rays brighten to the eternal star of hope and truth?

Scene 2.

Scene: Mrs. Lansky's home—poorly furnished, but neat.

(Mrs. Lansky, Mrs. Geisler, Lorens, Stella, Bachmann, Selkofsky, Mrs. Soupa. Mrs. Geisler *lively rocking herself, with hat on, gloves in her hand, dark, middle aged.*)

Mrs. Geisler. (*To* Mrs. Lansky.) Did you say you expected her back any moment? It's already half an hour.

Lansky. I dunno where she is. She go to town, to deliver work. You in a hurry, Mrs. Geisler? I tell Miss Stella, she go and see you—yes?

Geisler. No, no, I don't want her in my house no more.

Lansky. (*In surprise.*) What's the matter Mrs. Geisler? You all de time like Miss Stella. She show me a letter when you invite her to stay mit you.

Geisler. Yes; that time I didn't know her so well. Tell me, Mrs. Lansky, have you many gentlemen callers?

Lansky. Some time come here Mr. Mayer, Mr. Brown, or Mr.——

Geisler. Wasn't she closer acquainted with these gentlemen?

Lansky. Maybe. I dunno how you mean?

Geisler. (*Aside.*) How do you mean! My, isn't she stupid. (*Aloud.*) Don't these men court her?

Lansky. What do you mean—court her?

Geisler. (*Aside.*) That woman hasn't the least education. (*Aloud.*) Doesn't she flirt with them?

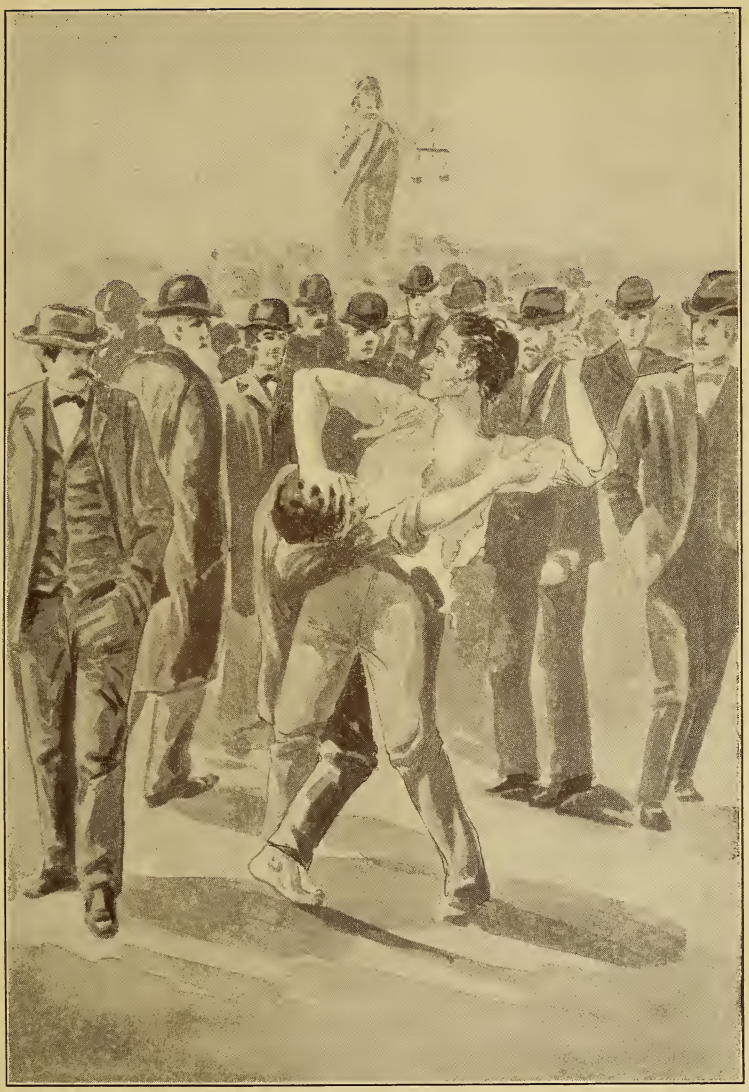
Lansky. Flirt? I dunno. She talk mit everybody—make no difference, rich or poor, Jew or Christian. She all de time say something good. Always have bright word for everybody.

Geisler. That so? It's no trick to fool you; but I'll open your eyes. She doesn't flirt around here, because she's picked out my Rudy. I admire her taste, but I won't have it! The idea! My Rudy and a girl that hasn't a rag to her back.

Lansky. Maybe. I dunno, Mrs. Geisler; but I think you no got right.

Geisler. You'll change your mind—look at this. (*Produces a letter.*) See what she wrote my Rudy. Four pages of it. I thought I'd drop dead!

Lansky. Maybe, Mrs. Geisler. I no care how long de letter is. What's in it?



Struggle for existence

GEISLER. That's the worst of it. She is in love with my Rudy—in love up to her ears.

LANSKY. Maybe. I dunno. But——

GEISLER. Listen for yourself. I'll read the letter to you. (*Reads.*) "Esteemed friend: This, my letter, will hardly come as a surprise to you, all the more, as I believe, to have discovered in you one as having a desire to be enlightened." (*To* LANSKY.) You understand? She has noticed, that, since she has been making goo-goo eyes at him, he is getting kind of restless, and before he can get away, she wants to tell him how much she's stuck on him. The poor boy! (*Reads.*) "I will——

MRS. LANSKY. (*Interrupting.*) Maybe, I dunno; but——

MRS. GEISLER. But what?

MRS. LANSKY. I call Mr. Lorens. He is a educated man. He can read the letter and tell us. I dunno. He is honest, Mrs. Geisler, and he reads awful nice.

MRS. GEISLER. Call him, for all I care, and let him read it loud.

MRS. LANSKY. (*While going out.*) Maybe, I dunno, but——

MRS. GEISLER. (*Alone.*) That woman makes me sick with her "maybe, I dunno." These people are awful ignorant.

(*Pause.* MRS. LANSKY *enters in a cheerful mood.*)

MRS. LANSKY. He come right away. You see what a fine man he is. Such a treat to talk mit a educated man!

LORENS. (*Enters.*) Hello, Mrs. Lansky! What is it? You want me to mind your baby for you?

MRS. LANSKY. (*Laughs.*) No, not for me. (*Somewhat bashfully introducing.*) Mrs. Geisler, Mr. Lorens.

MRS. GEISLER. (*Aside.*) My, how homely! (*Aloud.*) Pleased to meet you. Mrs. Lansky told me you could read so well, and that you were unprejudiced in your judgment.

MR. LORENS. (*Bows.*) What can I do for you, Mrs. Geisler?

MRS. GEISLER. Here is a letter. (*Hands him letter.*) I guess it does not matter from whom. Will you please read it to us, and give us your opinion—will you please?

LORENS. Let me see what it is. (*Sits down, examines letter.*)

LANSKY. Loud.

GEISLER. Loud, if you please.

LORENS. Patience, ladies, let me get my bearings. (*Pause. Commences to read.*) "Esteemed Friend: This, my letter will hardly come as a surprise to you, all the more as I believe to have discovered in you, as one who desires to be enlightened"——

GEISLER. (*To* LANSKY.) The same as I read to you. (*Every time* GEISLER *interrupts* LORENS, *he fixes her from over his glasses.*)

LORENS. (*Reads.*) "I will give you an explanation, though I hardly know whether this confession on my part will tend to strengthen the intellectual ties between us, or whether it will estrange us. Who knows, my friend"——

GEISLER. "My friend." Isn't that lovely?

LORENS. (*Reads.*) "Friend—a term so much abused. A relative, an acquaintance—whom do we not call friend—mere formality, conforming with the usages of society, or business, or as circumstances may demand." (LORENS *interrupting himself.*) True, very true! (*Reads.*) "Who appreciates the true meaning of the word friend? What sublimity, what true love and purity does this meaning convey—of which only followers of the highest ideals can be conscious, and only 'he' who can appreciate.' (LORENS *interrupting himself.*) Correct—very good! (MRS. GEISLER *looks in unpleasant surprise at* LORENS. LORENS *continues to read.*) "And although but for a moment I have enjoyed this happiness, I can fully appreciate the token of your sincerity. You"——

GEISLER. My son! My Rudy! Her——

LORENS. (*Reads on.*) "You, Rudolph, only know my desire—my ambition. You know my past and my circumstances, which, dark as they appear, have not been able to destroy what fate had in store for me. But how to obtain my aim? for which I have hoped and prayed fervently. I see fulfillment of my highest ambition before me. Success! Still a deep gulf separates me from it. Friendless, I have traveled this hard road. A misstep, and I sink into oblivion. I feel"——

GEISLER. I don't know what she could mean by that.

LORENS. I believe you, Mrs. Geisler. (*Continues reading.*) "I feel the enormous weight of the onward struggle, against cruel fate—threatening to send me to destruction. But there I see a ray of hope. I feel, I want to grasp your hand to guide me."

GEISLER. Now it's coming—listen——

LORENS. (*Reads.*) "I meet the kind, beaming eye of a man, con-

scious of his power, full of energy, immovable as a rock. It was you, Rudolph, I looked up to."

GEISLER. The idea—calling him Rudolph—think of it!

LORENS. (*Reads on.*) "Our intellectual intercourse seems to convince me that we have something in common. Our paths lead to the same goal, and what joy overcomes me at the thought at last to have found a helping hand, a true friend—who would lead me, to reach that ideal future for which I have struggled so long."

GEISLER. Pshaw!

LORENS. (*Reads on.*) "I wonder do you understand? Do not think me bold. Extend me your helping hand as a true friend, and should fortune favor me or not, I shall ever appreciate your sacrifice." (*Holds letter, and studies a while.*)

LANSKY. What you think, Mr. Lorens ?

GEISLER. An up-to-date proposal.

LANSKY. What do it mean, in de letter?

LORENS. It means, pearls cast before swine. (*To* MRS. GEISLER.) Beyond doubt this letter is addressed to your son.

GEISLER. Yes. Do you know my son?

LORENS. No. Did your son hand you this letter?

GEISLER. Not exactly. A mother naturally takes an interest in her son's affairs. The letter dropped out of his coat pocket, you know.

LORENS. Accidentally, as it usually happens. Do you want to hear my opinion?

GEISLER. Mrs. Lansky called you for that purpose, didn't she? (*Dignified.*) Though I think I can judge for myself. One thing sure—it shows the artfulness of a woman desperately in love.

LANSKY. (*Busies herself around stove.*) Maybe. I dunno. But—

LORENS. These are the sorrowful pleadings of a deserted human heart—in its almost superhuman efforts, on the way to eternal light—not a word of love, not the least that could be construed as improper.

LANSKY. I dunno—but that's what I thought.

GEISLER. Do you want to tell me, Mr. Lorens, that I am altogether unable to judge? I have a splendid education. My brother is a very rich man—and belongs to the aristocracy.

LORENS. I do not doubt that in the least, though all that has very little influence on the character and disposition of a person—something that no money can buy—but finds itself in the make-up of humanity.

LANSKY. I think so myself. I dunno; but——

GEISLER. Listen, Mr. Lorens, when Mrs. Lansky spoke to me about you, I expected to find a man able to judge human nature better than that.

LORENS. (*Curtly.*) Very sorry, if you are disappointed.

Geisler. I see this much, that you are easily mislead by smooth language. Or perhaps you are a little in love with her yourself.

LANSKY. (*Angry.*) Go on with you! He never seen her at all.

LORENS. (*Impulsive.*) And I see this much, that here ignorance and narrow-mindedness go hand in hand to attempt to degrade aspirations of a soul that is far beyond your sympathy and comprehension. Allow me. (*Bows. Exit* LORENS.)

GEISLER. (*Disappointed.*) Well, well! That's something new! The audacity!

LANSKY. You asked him his opinion, and he give it to you.

GEISLER. So you mean to say he is right?

LANSKY. Maybe. I think he is right.

GEISLER. Do you know, Mrs. Lansky, you really have too good an opinion of that girl. You know what she called you? Shee-nee! I bet she is over to my house now waiting for Rudy to come to supper. (*Picks up gloves and pocketbook from table, accidentally drops letter.*) She'll find out who I am! I'll send her flying about her business. Remember one thing, Mrs. Lansky: He that puts his hand in the fire burns his fingers, and that's what will happen to you. Good-by. I must go. I'd like to meet her before she goes. (*Exit* MRS. GEISLER.)

LANSKY. (*Shaking her head.*) Maybe, I dunno. (*Presently* STELLA *enters, box in arms.*)

STELLA. How do, Mrs. Lansky?

LANSKY. You home, Miss Stella? (*Takes box from her.*) Bring some more work home? (*Aside.*) How she looks! It makes my heart ache

STELLA. Here is one dollar and sixty cents, Mrs. Lansky. Forty cents is for the medicine and ten cents for alcohol, to do my work, the rest is for you, towards my board. I feel so weak, so weak, Mrs. Lansky. I feel I cannot live, and yet, I cannot die:

Exstinguished Light

LANSKY. Miss Stella, I got some soup for you. You like so much, do you good. (*Puts supper on the table.*)

STELLA. Thank you very much, Mrs. Lansky, you are so kind. (*Sits down to eat.*)

MOSES. (*Enters.*) Hello, Miss Stella, you hungry? Leave the dishes. Ha—ha!

STELLA. (*Laughs.*) Don't be afraid. How are you, Mosey?

MOSES. (*Aside.*) Poor girl! Poor girl! (*Sits down on the sofa with a sigh.*)

LANSKY. You see Mrs. Geisler?

STELLA. Mrs. Geisler? No; what should I do there? When I do go, they seem to take so much trouble, with the cooking and everything else, and you know how I hate these formalities. Outside of that, they seem to be real nice people.

LANSKY. What kind of a man is Mrs. Geisler's son?

STELLA. Rudy? Ah, he is an exceptionally intelligent man; and I wish he was home oftener. Then I would feel like going there.

LANSKY. Maybe. I dunno; but—— (STELLA, *after hardly touching her meal, sits down in rocker.*)

STELLA. Again you say, I dunno. Say you do know, and if any one wishes to dispute it, let him prove it.

MOSES. (*Watches her with a sigh.*) The poor girl!

LANSKY. Really, I dunno, Miss Stella. You know, when I say anything wrong, people laugh.

STELLA. People do not laugh because you say anything wrong; it is because they don't know better.

MOSES. Right she is.

LANSKY. And I have no education—or——

STELLA. That is not always necessary. The main thing, you have common sense. You can well distinguish between right and wrong; you only lack the courage to defend your right. You must not always look up to others as your superiors. They are only human beings after all.

MOSES. Jenny, I think she is right.

STELLA. What did you want to say, Mrs. Lansky?

LANSKY. Can exist friendship between man and woman? Married man and single woman, or married woman and single man?

STELLA. Well, what do you think?

LANSKY Yes; I think so.

STELLA. That's right. A man and woman can be true friends in any case.

LANSKY. But then, they must love each other.

STELLA. Why should they not? (LANSKY *and* MOSES *look at one another in surprise.*) It all depends on what people understand by love. Merely to gratify our animal desire is not love.

MOSES. I think so, too, Jenny.

STELLA. The term friendship conveys too pure and lofty a thought to admit of any immoral purposes.

LANSKY. I dunno. Not many people exist, I think, who—who—— (*Tries to express herself.*)

STELLA. Who are capable of understanding such pure affection.

LANSKY. Yes, that's what I mean.

STELLA. You are right, Mrs. Lansky. The majority misconstrue such principles. Education and society prescribe the destiny of average mortals who adopt rules, forms and fashions, to guide them. They are accepted as law, and passed from one generation to another. To these they are slaves. Furthermore, everything is estimated according to worldly values. Depravity of mind and body are general. Things in this world are merely a matter of price. If a man intends to start up in business without the necessary means, he looks about to make a match, and with a convenient amount of self-deception, the conventional arrangement is entered into, without, of course, considering congeniality of character as though human character itself can be trimmed to pattern, as dress or manners. Ridiculous; no, abominable!

LANSKY. Wonderful, Miss Stella. I wish I was half what you are.

STELLA. Don't wish that, you would be much unhappier. You are suffering enough as it is.

LANSKY. Why you tink—are people who tink and are just, so unhappy?

STELLA. Why? Because people who elevate their minds to justice and kindness towards their fellowmen soon discern the deep-rooted evils of our present social conditions. A righteous mind revolts against the unnatural and narrow laws which keep humanity in darkness and lower it to the beast; and the worst—humanity has itself to blame, for

the chains that keep it enslaved. Savage competition forces men to take advantage of their very neighbor—worse than that, forces them to aggravate the sufferings of their own kin. Regretful as it is, these pitiable beings, in spite of all the noble teachings and sacrifices of our modern Jesus, refuse to be enlightened. In the course of time, mind and emotions have become dull, under the pressure of these ignoble forces—yes, to a great extent, have degenerated. But how can we condemn them, where they deserve of sympathy and pity? Humanity has degenerated. People have become mental cripples.

LANSKY. (*In surprise.*) Modern Jesus! Has there been only one Jesus?

STELLA. Yes, in those days. Nowadays we have more.

LANSKY. But Jesus suffer—suffer very much.

STELLA. So he does. Little humanity knows of his sufferings. He walks about his fellowmen, trying to comfort their sorrows, himself with a heart bleeding from many wounds. (*Rises, greatly agitated.*) I should like to retire for a moment; will you pardon me? (STELLA *exit.*)

LANSKY. Yes, go my dear. (*Commences to clear off table.* MOSES *takes his hat, fingering it nervously.*)

MOSES. She look awful bad; you know, Jenny.

LANSKY. I dunno, what will I do if she go?

MOSES. She must go, Jenny. She no can live here very long, Jenny.

LANSKY. I know, Mose, I know. But what I do, when she is gone? Nobody so nice to me, so good. She always understand me.

MOSES. She go soon?

LANSKY. I been to the Hebrew Charity to-day. They give her a ticket first-class free. Christian Charity no wanted to give her, and she cry so much, all day. But I no can part from her. Mose! I can no live mit'out her.

MOSES. Ta-ta-ta! Jenny! You no must be selfish, Jenny. (*Rises.*) I'll go. Come back to-morrow. (*Looks at* STELLA'S *photo on the mantelpiece with a sigh.*) Poor girl! The poor girl!

LANSKY. (*To the door.*) I go along, and buy bread. (*Both exit.*)

STELLA. (*Enters.*) Nobody here? (*Sits down at table.*) I am so tired and such pains in my head and chest. (*Opens box, takes out pieces*

for flower making, lights alcohol lamp and commences work.) LANSKY *enters softly and watches her for a moment.* STELLA *suddenly drops her head on the table.* LANSKY, *terrified, approaches, takes lamp and all, and throws out of the window.*

LANSKY. (*Lamenting.*) My, oh my, oh my! Is she deathly sick, and yet must work.

STELLA. (*Raising her head.*) Mrs. Lansky! Mrs. Lansky! What are you doing! All my work!

LANSKY. The devil with your work, you no work any more.

STELLA. My God! (*Picks up pieces about her.*)

LANSKY. Maybe, I dunno—he can do the work himself. Goodness sakes, what misery, and how she looks, so sick, so sick.

STELLA. (*Picks up letter which* MRS. GEISLER *dropped. Hurt.*) What is this? How does this get here, Mrs. Lansky?

LANSKY. (*Aside.*) And that, now! It will break her heart.

STELLA. Would you not tell me, Mrs. Lansky?

LANSKY. (*Aside.*) I no can tell her a lie, and I no can tell the truth. My, oh, my! what shall I do?

STELLA. Mrs. Lansky!

LANSKY. Mrs. Geisler was here. She forgot. (*Sighs.*)

STELLA. How did she get it? That letter belongs to—— Now, what do you want to do with it? What did she say?

LANSKY. (*Aside.*) I dunno, what—what can I tell? What on earth can I say? (*To* STELLA.) She say nuddings, Miss Stella, she only laugh.

STELLA. (*Stirring.*) She laughed? Is it possible! He too? (*Sinks back into her chair.*) And I must live under such—— Uncle, why did you not take me——?

LANSKY. (*Helpless.*) Stella, Miss Stella, no take it so hard! You get help to-day. Hebrew Charity give you a ticket.

STELLA. The Hebrew Charity! (*Livens up.*) Is that true? A ticket to Colorado? I can live and reach my aim? Friends! How shall I thank you? So Jews again are helping me? Christian Charity closed its doors on me. In vain I appealed to the petrified hearts of the followers of Christ! What mockery!

LANSKY. (*Aside.*) What, for heaven's sakes, I do when she go?

STELLA. (*Taking* LANSKY'S *hands in hers.*) My dear, dear friend!

How can I thank you? Tell me how? It would be impossible, yes, ridiculous, to try to express what I feel. Words cannot express what I owe to you.

STELLA. Perhaps some day I may be able to return your kindness to me. (*With the last words she grows weaker—breaks down.*)

LANSKY. Come, Miss Stella; you can't stand up. You too sick. (*Leads her to a chair.*)

STELLA. (*Takes up letter, again looking it over.*) Oh, how that hurts; how it hurts! (*Breaks down completely.*)

LANSKY. (*Catching her in her arms.*) Stella! My only Stella! You no must die! You no must leave me. I can no live mit'out you Oh, oh, oh! (*Knock on the door.*)

(BACHMANN, SELFOKSKY and MRS. SOUPA *enter.* MRS. SOUPA, *holding ticket in her hand, remained in the door a moment, overcome.*

LANSKY. Oh, Mr. Bachmann, Stella! They have killed her! Oh, oh! They have broken her heart! (BACHMANN *and* SELKOFSKY *carry* STELLA *to the sofa.*)

SOUPA. I fear we are too late.

SELKOFSKY. (*Startled, terrified.*) Is it possible?

BACHMANN. (*Looking more closely at her.*) Stella Brandenfells!

SELKOFSKY. So Sam's prediction came true.

BACHMANN. Poor, poor Stella! (*Softly, to* MRS. LANSKY, *giving her some money.*) Will you attend to her burial? We will send you more money if you need any.

LANSKY. Oh, oh! They have killed her! People what call themselves nobility—aristocracy!

SOUPA. Aristocracy? No, my good woman, but those insolent' heartless individuals, whose only purpose in life is money. Whose only happiness lies in mammon.

LANSKY. (*Scornfully.*) All people what have money call themselves nobility.

SOUPA. No, no! It's not what people would like to be, but what they really are.

LANSKY. Maybe, I dunno. Who are the nobility if not the rich?

SOUPA. Only people who are noble minded and just can lay claim to real nobility.

LANSKY. Poor people too?

SOUPA. Poor or rich; all those, or, better, only those who are above everything that is low and narrow.

LANSKY. You find many people that way?

BACHMANN. Very, very few, Mrs. Lansky; to our sorrow.

SELKOFSKY. Indeed, very few!

LANSKY. I dunno—but why do such people exist (*pointing to* STELLA) when there's no justice for them? I ask you—what she live for? Oh, oh! such misery and injustice in this world!

BACHMANN. Time will overcome this. We cannot force nature. Step by step we will advance as we better the social conditions of the masses.

SELKOFSKY. Another victim of the terrible injustice of existing conditions. "Modern Justice!" Poor Stella!

(MRS. SOUPA *takes a bouquet of violets from her bosom and passes it between* STELLA'S *fingers.*)

SCENE 3.

SCENE: Mrs. Lansky's home. Lansky kneeling at side of Stella's coffin. Moses and Lorens on other side heads bent in silent prayer. Moses and Lorens then turn to Lansky, who is sobbing, assisting her to a near-by sofa.

LORENS. Do not let us disturb her rest, Mrs. Lansky. Let us bear our sorrows in silence. As great as our loss may be, let us bear it without a murmur, as poor Stella did. Her aim was high, and great have been her sufferings. Now death has relieved her. Let it be a comfort to our souls. Though she has left us, her memory remains with us; and let her kind heart be a guide to us, to travel the road of justice.

MOSES. Amen.

LANSKY. (*Sobbing.*) How can I? How can I? She was all that was dear to me. Oh! If she could only live again!

MOSES. (*Wiping a tear in sorrow.*) Jenny! Jenny——

LORENS. Look around you, Mrs. Lansky. You are not the only one left alone in this world.

LANSKY. I know! I know! But how can I bear it?

LORENS. (*Taking* LANSKY'S *hands.*) Think of her (*motioning with one hand to coffin*). If she could see your sorrow, do you think it would make her more happy? To you she has been a friend, a true

friend. Has she not suffered enough? Her most exalted ideas shattered, her kind heart bruised by disappointments, a life of misery, laid to rest. Be true to your friend; bear her memory in your heart—and grieve not, since her sufferings are over.

LANSKY. (*Sobbing.*) Stella—Stella! (*Knock on the door.* MOSES *opens it.* MRS. BRANDENFELLS *enters with two women, one with wreath, the other carrying a package.*)

BRANDENFELLS. (*Entering in surprise.*) Is this where she lived? (*Stepping to coffin, while* LANSKY, LORENS *and* MOSES *look unpleasantly disturbed.*)

BRANDENFELLS. (*Reproachfully, with faked emotion.*) And there she lies! Stella, Stella, my poor girl! (*As she notices her poor dress and poor coffin*) and dying in such poverty! Why did you leave me? Oh, oh! How shall I bear it! (*The two women step up to coffin and place wreath at the foot, while* MRS. BRANDENFELLS *holds handkerchief to her eyes. Steps up to* MRS. LANSKY.) You pardon me, my good woman. I am her aunt. I had no idea she was so sick. Oh—why did not anybody tell me? My poor niece; and to die in such poverty! Tell me, how did she die?

LANSKY. (*Mustering her.*) Mrs. Brandenfells? You? Is it possible! And she die—because nobody would take care of her.

BRANDENFELLS. Oh, my dear woman! She was welcome in my home any time. She knew it; but she was too proud.

LANSKY. Maybe, I dunno. Too proud? She had too much self-respect, you mean?

BRANDENFELLS. Self-respect? She would have been in far better surroundings had she stayed in my house. Look at her poor clothes!

LANSKY. No, madam! She didn't care to wrap warm clothes around her body. What she needed was sunshine—sunshine for her soul.

BRANDENFELLS. Goodness! And she could not find that among Christians? And have you not sent for a minister?

LANSKY. (*Coldly.*) No, ma'm. Our religion was good enough for her, and I don't think your minister can make undone what she suffered.

BRANDENFELLS. But why didn't she come to me? Wouldn't it have been better for her if she had gone to a convent, as I wanted

her to? Surely, you are not going to bury her in this coffin, and these clothes?

LANSKY. Maybe—that's the best we can give her.

BRANDENFELLS. Oh! Then we must take her over to my house at once.

FIRST WOMAN. Isn't it terrible!

SECOND WOMAN. (*Starting for the door.*) I'll notify the undertaker.

BRANDENFELLS. Yes, do, please.

SECOND WOMAN. (*To* MRS. LANSKY.) Who is your undertaker?

LANSKY. What? No, ma'am, here she died, and here she'll be buried! You want to disgrace her memory with your profanity?

BRANDENFELLS. (*Dignified.*) Madam!

LANSKY. Did you take care of her when she was living?

BRANDENFELLS. Was that my fault?

LANSKY. Did you not order her from your house?

BRANDENFELLS. Because she would not obey!

LORENS. (*To* BRANDENFELLS.) Madam, you want to cause a disturbance over the dead body of one that was dear to all of us?

FIRST WOMAN. Goodness!

BRANDENFELLS. Sir, she is my niece, and as such I am nearer to her than any one else. (LORENS *exit.*)

LANSKY. Yes, you should have done! Now she is dead, you come here with your cheap trash (*taking wreath from coffin*) to disgrace the memory of the dead, and tear new wounds in the hearts of those that worshiped her.

BRANDENFELLS. You are too sensitive, my dear woman. Think, how I must feel. Isn't she my niece? You do not know what I wanted to do for her.

LANSKY. What you wanted to do for her?

BRANDENFELLS. Yes! But she was rather too particular for a girl of her class. See the opportunities she had. She could have married a wealthy man, she didn't want it. Then, when I wanted to send her to a convent, didn't she refuse?

LANSKY. To a convent? And marry a rich man? She could not live with a lie in her heart! She was too pure and noble.

BRANDENFELLS. Yes! And instead she preferred to run around in rags before she would——

LANSKY. Before she would sell soul and body.

BRANDENFELLS. Madam, do you want to insult me?

SECOND WOMAN. Don't, don't! What can you expect from such people.

BRANDENFELLS. (*Opening package and stepping up to coffin, looking at* STELLA'S *dress.*) Goodness! The same dress she wore when she left my house. We have brought a nice white dress for her.

LANSKY. Such a hypocrite! Why do you bring this dress now? Why didn't you cover the body while there was life in it? Instead to cover the bones, that turn to dust?

BRANDENFELLS. That is a sin, my dear woman. You are unjust. You see, I am getting old myself, and who supports me? Must I not look out for myself first?

LANSKY. Maybe; I dunno. Who are these people? They walk about in silk dresses, and are afraid they might neglect themselves, and preach to others, love your neighbor as yourself. Is that right? And what you come here for? You never come here before. Did you ever ask before if she needed a dress, or something to eat? Now, you come here, to cover with a white dress the unkindness you have shown her? (BRANDENFELLS *and women dumfounded.*)

FIRST WOMAN. Come, Rosa. You can't talk with this woman. See the class she belongs to. It would be beneath the dignity of a lady. (FIRST WOMAN *exit.* SECOND WOMAN *starts for the door, turns around and waits.*)

BRANDENFELLS. Wait! Wait! My God! I must know where she will be buried. I want to at least put a cross on her grave.

LANSKY. A cross? She has taken her cross with her, madam. She wouldn't need a monument to mark the resting place of one whose heart was broken by selfish and narrow-minded hypocrites.

BRANDENFELLS. Goodness, what a sin!

LANSKY. Or did you think that a cross could relieve her sufferings, and conceal your selfishness?

BRANDENFELLS. What? I? (*Sobbing.*) Stella, Stella, what have I done?

SECOND WOMAN. Rosa, Rosa, I cannot listen to this any longer! Your kind words are wasted.

BRANDENFELLS. I can hardly believe it. She is dead. Oh, oh! (*Starting towards the door, leaving dress and wreath.*)

LANSKY. Don't cry because she is dead—but "why" she died. (BRANDENFELLS *and* SECOND WOMAN *exit. Throwing dress and wreath into corner.*) Such mockery!

MOSES. You done right, Jenny.

(*Enter* BACHMANN, LORENS, SELKOFSKY, MRS. SOUPA, *two women with wreaths, and undertaker, all dressed in black. Men hold hats in their hands.* LANSKY, *after a last look at* STELLA, *starts to sob again.* MRS. SOUPA *and two women surround* MRS. LANSKY, *trying to comfort her. Then all surround coffin.*)

BACHMANN. Let us pray. (*Prays aloud "Lord's prayer."*)

(LANSKY *then falls in a swoon, assisted to sofa by two women. After a last look, undertaker closes coffin, places wreaths on same, then* BACHMANN, LORENS, SELKOFSKY *and* MOSES *lift coffin and start for the door.* LANSKY *comes to, and assisted by women, staggers after coffin, lamenting.*)

ACT V

Scene 1.

Barroom. Sign in barroom: "Gentlemen will not and others *must* not spit on the floor." Several surround bar. Helling, Burgdorf, Lorens, Romeo, Mr. Milton, later Sam and others. Groth, keeper; Maxel, bartender. Round tables, in German style.

Burgdorf. (*Enters and shakes hands with* Helling *and* Keeper.) How do, old chap?

Helling. Shake, old man. You look as if you underwent a forty days' fast.

Burgdorf. It certainly did go hard with me, God only knows.

Several. (*Drawing near.*) Burgdorf, are you still alive? My, how we missed you.

Helling. What became of you? What are you, anyway—poet, cobbler or tramp?

Burgdorf. Now, then, you rascals! I hardly get back, when you begin to tantalize. (*Somebody hands him a glass of beer. Holding it high, he toasts.*)

Here's to all Humanity,
Where'er it may exist—
'Tis like Christian Charity,
Enveloped in a mist.

(*Applause follows. Sets empty glass before him and becomes thoughtful.*)

Helling. What's the matter with you? Are you sleeping?

Burgdorf. I dreamt, I dreamt I was in heaven.

Aye, I counted them, there were seven.
And in the highest one was I indeed,
And rode the very grandest steed.

But as I neared the Almighty throne
From which universal wisdom shone
The angels cried, "Come here, if thou be man,"
And thus, with pride, to enter I began.

My steed grows high, and with a sigh,
Oh, shall I tell, I slipped to hell!

SEVERAL. Bravo.

KEEPER. Too bad about that fellow——

HELLING. Comrade, you are the same old fellow. They squeezed you like a lemon, but your mind is as fresh as a newly tapped beer keg.

BURGDORF. Fool! Compare your own head to a hogshead.

HELLING. He needs but open his mouth——

A JEW. And he says something what rhymes.

HELLING. Right so. People ought to set you a monument in your lifetime. Shoot off. Let's have some more. You've got them by the bunches in your pocket. You need but whistle. I envy you. If you had as much money as you have sense, I would have done away with you long since.

MAXEL. (*Aside.*) If these people ain't bughouse——

BURGDORF. Thunder reigned and lightning too,
As I went my way below.
Thousand steps I waded through
Till ne'er further I could go.

Devil, Satan, king of hell,
Rose before me, horns and all.
How, from where, I cannot tell,
Seemed o'er-towering, broad and tall.

Pleasantly he shook my hand,
Asked me also for my name.
Asked me also for my stand.
Said I: "We are all the same.

"We are Christians, nothing more.
Vice we hate, while good's our aim.
Love and truth are at our door.
Thus it is Lord's grace we gain."

Fiercely scolded he and with anger roared:
"Fools ye! Christians would ye be?
Blood be-spattered gold ye hoard—
Heaven you preach, but hell you see.

Full many a step now wandered we
Until the scenes bewildered me.
"This is yet nether land;
But yonder see the hellish strand."

Thus he spoke to me in haste
As a thousand souls he chased
Right beyond the border there
Into the heart of the fiery glare.

"Those are Christians that you saw,
The kind that up like mushrooms grow. "
Thus he spoke and looked around.
And quickly vanished from the ground.

I closed my eyes, then looked around
And felt the downpour of a rain.
Each drop sprang up a human form
Until it seemed a human storm.

They shrieked out fiercely all around
But I could not tell sound from sound.
Terror stared me in the face,
It's there I knelt to say my grace.

With laughter roared they loud and long
Then screeched to me their heinous song
"If ye fools but Christians were
Why heal ye not the misery
But yet excite it more to be?

"Christ is but a teaching true
Teaching never old nor new—
E'er as pure as morning dew

"Honor, justice, charity,
Is true Christianity,
Thus is Christ a rarity.

"Christ e'er lived upon this earth.
E'er has been, ne'er needed birth.
Thus your story ends in mirth.

"Ye banish all your Tolstoi kind
For there a Christian ye find,
The only kind that hell declined.

"But hand me down that rocky fellow
Who lights the world with oil and tallow
And rules it then with heart so hollow."

SEVERAL. Bravo! Bravo!

MAXEL. He makes me sick.

HELLING. You're a fellow after my own heart. (*Pulling him by the sleeve.*) Tell us, what did the world make out of you?

BURGDORF. (*Sarcastically laughing.*) A whole lot.

HELLING. Joking aside! (*Laughter.*) Tell us, what are you doing, anyway?

BURGDORF. Everything and everybody. That's why I came here!

HELLING. I know, I know! The devil couldn't do you. But what is your profession?

BURGDORF. Traveler.

HELLING. Traveler? What kind of traveler?

BURGDORF. Tourist—pleasure tourist.

HELLING. A—the devil. Speak English, that we may understand you.

BURGDORF. Well, then, listen. I travel from town to town. If I am hungry, I ask for something to eat. If my suit becomes too transparent, I ask for another.

HELLING. I understand. But how do you travel without money?

BURGDORF. I travel with four-legged people.

SEVERAL. Four-legged people! ha, ha, ha!

HELLING. The devil take you, but how?

MAXEL. Four-legged people! There's no such thing. Bughouse, bughouse, that's all!

KEEPER. Hard times, Maxel. He ought to be buried for a hundred years

ONE OF GROUP. Look, boys, there comes Lorens! (LORENS *enters, in large checked trousers and green coat, carrying large roll.*)

LORENS. Good cheer, comrades!

SEVERAL. Well, I'll be darned. Bad money always returns. Welcome home! We need your money.

MAXEL. Well, well, I'll eat my hat!

BURGDORF. God bless you, what ill wind blew you here?

LORENS. The same, my boy, that blew when you honored America with your visit.

BURGDORF. Fellow, you look miserable. Where in the world did you get those trousers?

LORENS. (*Views himself.*) Well checkered and never patched.

HELLING. (*Holds a torn piece up in the air.*) Man, where you locked up?

LORENS. What for?

BURGDORF. Quite possible; he'd cheat the very gallows of their due.

HELLING. (*Holds another piece in the air.*) Why, man, you wear stripes.

SEVERAL. Stripes? Impossible.

LORENS. (*Views himself again.*) Ah, yes, you mean that was once upon a time a wrapper. Fine stuff; feel it. I had no money, and—presto—made myself a pair thereof. (*Laughter follows.*)

MAXEL. People have nothing but nonsense in their heads.

HELLING. Tell us, Lorens, where have you been knocking about? What are you?

LORENS. (*Seriously.*) Traveler.

HELLING. (*Laughs loud.*) The same as this one? (*Pointing to* BURGDORF.)

LORENS. (*Comically.*) What? You are a traveler, too?

BURGDORF. Hm!

LORENS. Lazybones! I can't see why you shouldn't work.

BURGDORF. Me neither. And you?

LORENS. We-l-l, I'm something altogether different—can't you comprehend?

BURGDORF. Hm! I'm too, something different altogether—can't you comprehend?

LORENS. Nay, it lays beyond the jurisdiction of my comprehension. (*Drinks.*)

HELLING. (*Takes roll of pictures from him, unrolls, and holds one high, showing in the foreground two men, tearing each other's hearts out, while humanity looks calmly on.*)

SEVERAL. Ah!

BURGDORF. Thunder and lightning! What is this? Why, that is grand!

HELLING. Man, that is original, come here, traveler. Tell us, did you paint that?

LORENS. I think so!

HELLING. That's superb! What does it mean? What does it represent?

BURGDORF. (*Points to the ceiling.*) There! Read!

HELLING. (*Looks above.*) Quit your nonsense.

BURGDORF. Well, then, don't ask nonsense.

HELLING. Man, you are a——

LORENS. Yes, yes, we all know about it.

SEVERAL. The struggle for existence, great! Grand! This color effect.

HELLING. And the second one? Let's see the second one. (*Holds up second picture. A young man, long hair, emaciated and forlorn features, holding a violin in left hand, the broken bow in the right.*) Extinguished light.

BURGDORF. Lorens, that is beautiful! That is more than I would have expected of you.

HELLING. My highest esteem, comrade!

LORENS. Can't support wife and family on that. (*Leaves the pictures with the others, who pin them on the wall.*)

HELLING. Boys, I'm sick of this. I think it's my turn to live now!

BURGDORF. I shouldn't object, myself.

LORENS. (*Jumps suddenly around.*) Same here, boys.

HELLING. Men, we are most miserable, cowardly creatures! Here are two heads (*points at* BURGDORF *and* LORENS) to whom hundreds of these blood sucking vampires could not even hold a candle, yet they must go around with empty stomachs and striped pants. Ha, ha, ha, ha!

Damn it all to hell! (*Pounds his fist on table.*) Are we yet too weak to end all this? How long are we still to be led like sheep to mammons' altar, to be sacrificed? Even at tender age, when nature revolts and punishes with degeneration?

BURGDORF. How beautiful it would be if everybody could act to his best ability, his desires, his talents, leaving full play for ambition for higher things. Then Christ would exist again. Just imagine such, men! Wouldn't that be grand?

ROMEO. (*In background.*) It would take human beings for that.

KEEPER. (*Nods approvingly.*)

LORENS. Yes, it would be grand, if nobody would have to suffer hunger, and other physical and mental privations, but have full scope for free development; then we would not see the stamp of long hours and foul air of our factories upon so many pale and pinched faces. We would not see hunger and disease stalking, side by side with what were once nature's most noble examples of physical beauty and strength. We would not see womanhood trampled under the feet of debauchery and cast aside in the mire, with virtue finally extinct. A menace to morality? No, we would have human beings worthy of the name. Beings of strength and beauty, energy and character and love of life, in whom the mind would soar to inestimable height and purity.

HELLING. That's enough! Nay, boys, that must be ended, as sure as my name is Helling. Fetch us some beer, kinsman. (*Sits down to table.*) Come here, traveler, sit down and make yourself miserable. We have no right to be happy, for the happiness that we have is stolen.

MAXEL. Hm! I'm no kinsman of his'n. How some people do want to improve themselves by others.

SOME ONE IN BACKGROUND. Here is another genius.

BURGDORF. Where? A light can be seen from afar.

ROMEO. (*A long, meagre form, lifts one leg over the other and begins to sing.*) Yankee Doodle Dandy.

BURGDORF. Aye! To what category belongest thou?

ROMEO. Genus homo, specie krankuss.

HELLING. Then you'll have to eat Johnny-bread for seven years, and in the eighth wear striped pants.

ROMEO. Shall I do that and more. If I can become a full-fledged genius, shall I eat Johnny-cake for ten years and pork for twenty.

LORENS. (*Lifts a paper from the table, "The Freeman."*) Say, Helling, look and see what he writes.

HELLING. Go put that away, friend. When I see that, I could cry—cry for the stupidity of humanity. The man who edits that is three score ten. He sacrificed his whole life to the enlightenment of humanity, holding continuously before their eyes their degraded condition, and—and—— (*Jumps excitedly.*) To the devil with our society, with life itself. Come, comrades, toast.

MAXEL. Bughouse, bughouse!

(*A well-dressed man, carrying parcel, enters.*)

MILTON. Damn it! What did I get into?

HELLING. Have no fear, sir, we are all sociable fellows.

MILTON. Yes, but—— (*Pointing at the attires.*)

HELLING. Oh, you mean—well, you see, we are rehearsing a fools' carnival.

MILTON A thousand pardons, gentlemen. A sort of a stag party, I presume. Permit me, my name is Milton. Shoe manufacturer. I just obtained a patent for a little invention, and shall be pleased to have you all drink a glass of beer to its success.

BURGDORF. (*Sings German.*) Bier her, bier her, oder ich fall um.

(MAXEL, *after distributing the glasses, places himself with considerable importance in a prominent position, both hands in his pockets, whereby he exposes a picnic badge.*)

LORENS. Why, man, what mark of distinction have you there?

MAXEL. (*A little embarrassed and with feigned indifference.*) I? Oh! That, oh, yes—yes, that was once a great picnic and they gave prizes. (*Withheld laughter.*)

LORENS. A flower that blooms unseen.

BURGDORF. Yes, but for what?

HELLING. For what, Maxel?

MAXEL. Yes, ha, ha, ha, ha! They had three prizes: For men with brains, for those who could use their fists when needed, and for the one who had the most children, and I got the last two. (*Laughter interrupts.*)

BURGDORF. God Almighty, who art in heaven!

HELLING. Have mercy upon us.

MILTON. That's the man. (*Slaps* MAXEL *on the shoulder.*)

KEEPER and ROMEO. That's the man! That's him! (HELLING *and* BURGDORF *shake their heads.*)

LORENS. (*To himself.*) Dig into life, and where'er you may grasp it you will find it interesting.

MILTON. (*Turning to* HELLING *and* BURGDORF.) With whom have I the honor, gentlemen? No doubt, all well-known merchants.

KEEPER. (*Aside.*) They'll present him with a fib that has no better.

HELLING. The pleasure remains with us sir. (*Takes* MILTON'S *extended hand.*) My name is Loudermilk, of the banking firm of Loudermilk & Polesky, of San Francisco.

MILTON. Pleased to meet you. French descent, I presume?

HELLING. I believe so.

BURGDORF. My name is Biblizeckowen of the newly discovered gold mine in Eagle Pass, Colo., and this gentleman (*pointing to* LORENS) is a retired merchant.

MAXEL. Hasn't got a cent in his pockets. He makes me sick.

(MILTON *and* LORENS *shake.*)

HELLING. (*Raises his glass.*) Here's to everybody's health and prosperity.

MILTON. May it be granted. (*Turning in the direction of the pictures.*) That's a nice picture. Who made it? It almost looks like a lithograph.

ROMEO. (*Aside, from the rear.*) They'll make him believe the moon is made of green cheese.

HELLING. (*Pointing to* LORENS.) That gentleman.

MILTON. (*Approaches pictures,* HELLING, BURGDORF, *and* LORENS *follow him.*) So, so. And does it pay?

LORENS. No, I painted them for Art's sake. I did not expect them to pay.

MILTON. Excuse me; but you are a fool. There's no such thing as for Art's sake. Money controls everything. If you have money you have art. A friend of mine, when he came over here, was nothing but an ordinary Irishman. He became a politician, and you ought to see what an artist he is now. He's got some of the swellest pictures from Paris, which he bought himself. And his daughters—talk about your music—I tell you, when they play together, piano and banjo, and

rattle off the latest ragtime and coon songs; I tell you, they make instruments talk. But that—you only waste your time on. Time is money. Make money, and you can buy all the art you want. That's the way to do it.

HELLING. That's right, Mr. Milton. Step all over his corns. He's all full of just such nonsense. Instead of painting Gilt Signs with a big brush and making money, he sits all day long and daubs.

MILTON. My dear sir, in our great times, only he is a man, who has money. You may be the biggest scoundrel, but if you have money, you're "it" and you've got the respect of all the world, and if you go to church, you're simply a saint, and if you've money enough, you can pull the whole damn family along, make your wife a saintess and your children saintlets. But if you're poor, you may be ever so honest and intelligent, and go ever so early to church, and mean it too, but still you're nothing but a bum. Now, I am a business man, and have been all my life, and had to make my own living when only eleven years. Now, I've one of the finest libraries in the country, the prettiest books you ever saw, and I know what I am talking about.

ROMEO and KEEPER. He's right. (*Romeo takes box from the table and goes to the rear.*)

HELLING. (*Goes to* LORENS.) Put that in your pipe and smoke it. The man is right. (*Imitates a Jew.*) Hab ich Dir nicht gesagt. Money is geld und business is geschaeft—remember that.

MILTON. A picture like that you can buy at 75 cents with a frame.

MAXEL. That's the only man here that talks sense.

BURGDORF. Yes, cheaper still.

KEEPER. (*Sarcastically.*) My wife gets one like that without frame, wrapped around every pound of tea.

(BURGDORF, LORENS, HELLING *and* MILTON *sit down to table.*)

MILTON. (*Suddenly jumping up.*) Where is my shoe? Who's got that box?

HELLING. (*Aside.*) That man must have a spring under his seat.

ROMEO. (*From the background.*) Beg your pardon, sir, if I have made so free. (*Holds a shoe in the air.*) That is the most elegant thing I ever saw. It is simply artistic. (*Places it on table and studies it.* MILTON *laughs.*)

MILTON. (*Jumps up again.*) Say, don't you copy that on me! (*Goes and picks it up.*)

For Humanity you have suffered—alone to die

ROMEO. God forbid, we are all too stupid for that.

MILTON. (*Rising.*) Well, I must go. I must be in Washington to-morrow to attend to this business. I expect to make a lot of money with it. Good-by, gentlemen. I hope to see you in my store some day. Good-by! Time is money—time is money. (*Leaves.*)

KEEPER. Say, mister, you forgot to pay.

MILTON. (*Turning back.*) Oh, did I? Pardon me, it is not my habit. (*Pays and leaves.*)

KEEPER. Drop in again.

HELLING. (*To* LORENS.) Take that for an example! That's a man! Shame on you, you good for nothing!

LORENS. He's a genius.

ROMEO. (*In the rear.*) He ought to take a patent on himself. (*Sings.*) For he's a Yankee Doodle Dandy, etc.

(*Five men enter and sit down at table, one ordering five glasses of beer. One or two spit on the floor.*)

KEEPER. Say! isn't that sign big enough for you?

ONE OF THEM. That sign has nothing to do with us.

KEEPER. Wh-a-a-a-t?

ANOTHER. We are free men, and we do as we please.

ROMEO. (*Drawn.*) Free men?

FIRST ONE. Yes, we are free men, and this is a free country. We harm no man, but those attempting to harm us, we simply mow down. We have the same right as anybody else.

KEEPER. This is a free country, all right; but I'll show you who's boss here. (*Goes in front of bar.* MAXEL *hides behind bar. The party disperses with murmurings and threats.*) You better get out of this house. I'll show you right from wrong. There you are. (*Party exit.*)

ROMEO. (*Interrupting.*) That's where Maxel gets another prize. (*Laughter.* MAXEL *appears from behind bar, threatening with his fists.*)

KEEPER. That's what calls themselves Freethinkers. Haven't the faintest idea of what it is, but feel themselves big when they can spit all over other peoples' feet.

BURGDORF. You can't judge all by the actions of a few.

KEEPER. The majority are like that.

ROMEO. If such would run about at large, wouldn't that be a ienic. Holly Gee.

HELLING. Fellow, you're a peach.

ROMEO. Am I a peach? Then I'll remain a peach. Takes too long to become a genius, and what's more, it don't pay. I'm going to make money. Then I'll get time. I'll sell my time and make more money. By that time I'll be a gentleman and teach Sunday-school. I tell you, time is money; and money is boss.

BURGDORF. Come, Helling, let's have something from you. I long to hear one of the good old student songs.

HELLING. Certainly, with pleasure. (*Stands up and sings.*) Why life enduring, drink not beer alluring. (ROMEO *in rear plays violin.*

BURGDORF. Who's playing there?

SEVERAL. The original.

HELLING. (*Sings.*) Why should we not sometimes happy be?
With life's keenest spices,
Gambrinus's best devices,—
Why should I not happy be?

Nature's eyes now glancing, chrystal brooklets dancing,
Nature's bosom heaving full of golden rye.
Hop vines fully blooming, fragrance all consuming—
How it makes my heart e'er sigh!

Would in cellar lying, all the world defying,
With a thousand kegs full, hail to Bacchus, hail!
Drink to fullest measure, oft fermented treasure,
Melancholy's cure without a fail.

To his royal highness, who nigh died of dryness,
Who enticed the brain to his noble brew—
Him but I am praising, to the heavens raying,
Where they first of nectar knew.

When me Care embraces, Fate, with all her graces,
Makes the maiden leave me, makes e'en Amor fly,
To the drinkers' hall, then, for 'tis only then
Life would nothing us deny.

(*The last two lines are to be sung in refrain by all. It gradually, but quickly, grows dark. A curtain in back parts, exposing a structure some eight or ten feet high, composed of stone, on top of which the* Goddess of Justice *stands. On a step below,* Two Workingmen, a Woman *between them, grasping one another's outstretched hands, and appearing happy and contented.* Bacchus *on next step, right hand extended, holding a goblet. In a half-circle around him are placed busts of* Schiller, Goethe, Marquardt, Mozart *and* Beethoven, *decorated with vines and grapes. Each bust is embraced by a little girl, gaily dressed. To the left of the groups (about half height)* Christ, *on a cloud, extending blessings. Darkness gradually sets in again, and the following change takes place:*

Justice *on top step, head thrown back, covering face with right arm, sword at her feet, while the left hand has sunk, holding scale, which appears disarranged. Below her, same groups of working people, though this time in rags, and chained together, heads drooped, and looking around in despair. Below these, a skeleton, dressed in monk's garb, in a crouching position. The busts around are disfigured, and decorations partly torn off, while little girls lie by them, apparently unconscious. To the left of groups,* Christ, *on a cloud, wreath of thorns on his head, his head drooped in sorrow; back of him cross is faintly visible. As second picture disappears in the darkness, group in front sits quiet for a moment, lost in thought. While they sit there,* Sam, *poorly clad, enters, gazing and staring, without at first noticing surroundings—gesticulating. As the group slowly raise their heads again, in surprise noticing* Sam, *he becomes horrified and delirious.*)

Sam. (*Raving.*) Don't cast those eyes at me! Spare me! Let me go! Let me go!

Several. (*Jumping towards him.*) He is drunk!

Sam. (*As one touches him.*) Let me go! Leave me alone!

Helling. Sam, What's the matter? You are raving.

Lorens. Sam, old boy, how did you come here?

Sam. (*Frantically warding them off.*) Yes, I did it. I murdered them all. And it is for you, I did it. They murdered my wife, scattered my children, killed my soul. They have made a beast of me. Ha, ha, ha, ha! (*Laughs heinously, sinks into a chair dazed. Curtain drops.*)

Scene 2.

sam's vision.

Scene: Large public place. Early morning, at dawn. In the rear, houses reduced to chaos, with smoke yet rising here and there. Men, with stretchers, running to and fro. People carrying wounded moaning. A mass of people, of all classes, Sam in center defending himself desperately.

Sam. Let me go! Let me go! Let me go my way.

Selkofsky. (*Pressing forward.*) This way, Bachmann, this way!

Bachmann. (*Behind him.*) The people run that way.

Selkofsky. Let up, people! Don't be rash! Let me talk to him. (*To* Sam.) Why did you do it? (*Highly excited.*) Do you know what you have done?

Bachmann. Sam, Sam, you should have gone with us!

Sam. (*Cynically.*) Did you gain anything?

Selkofsky. (*Embarrassed.*) Gain? Not yet what we wanted, but we have formed a society of human beings. We have lessened misery much—very much.

Sam. Well, then, help here.

Bachmann. That we will, and we want to help you, too.

Sam. Me?

A Jew. (*Steps forward.*) Sam, where is Jutta? Where have you dein child?

Selkofsky and Bachmann. Where is your wife, Sam?

Sam. (*Surely.*) My child? My wife? Jutta! Jutta! (*Convulsions overcome him.*) Where is Jutta? You want to know? (*Frantically.*) I murdered her. With these two hands I choked her!

Selkofsky and Bachmann. Sam!

Several. Choked! That is not true! He's crazy!

Sam. Said you crazy? (*Stares into space and waves his hands frantically about.*) Brothers, damn me, if you will. I tell you, I was not crazy then; I am not so now, comrades. I may be a murderer, I may be an incendiary, but I have a heart that beats as warm as yours. Do you believe me? (*Cries like a child, and extends* Selkofsky *his hands, without looking up.*)

Selkofsky. I believe you, my poor friend. (*Holds him by the hand.*)

BACHMANN. What must you have suffered, to sink so low!

SAM. Sink so low? Oh, had you seen her, how she suffered (*wrings his hands before his face*) when she lay on the floor, with nothing to cover her but her clothes and my coat, which was torn to shreds. Oh! Had you heard her, how she begged for a bite to eat, for medicine! I had nothing, not even a piece of bread. Not a cent. Nothing, and no work. She begged me to get a doctor. I had no shoes, so I ran barefooted.

A JEW. Nu—did he come?

SAM. Yes, he come (*laughs bitterly*) and what he said.

OTHER JEW. (*Anxiously.*) Well, well?

SAM. Said he, "Give me money, and I will save her."

JEW. One of our people?

SAM. One of our people. I had no money. I had not a cent. He went away, not even so much as looking at her. Oh, how I felt! (*Shakes his fist in the air.*) How I hated myself, humanity, the world, and my wife because she got sick. Had I then the doctor, I would have put the knife into his heart.

JEW. Nu, and your wife, she hear what the doctor said?

SAM. She asked me if he leave her medicine. (*Laughs heinously.*) I say yes. Give it to me, Sam, quick, quick, she say. Then she looked at me! There! There! Take her away! (*Raving.*) I see her now! Take her away, I say! (*Cowers from his imagination. Laughs and cries at the same time.*) Oh, comrades, had you heard her, had you seen her! And I stood there and could do nothing. I could not give her my own flesh, my own blood. (*Beats himself against his breast.*) I had to look on! How terribly she suffered! I could help nothing—could do nothing—because I had no money! (*Cries out in horror.*) Yes, money, money! Base metal! Had I money, I had her to-day. (*Suddenly looks wildly around.*) Then I jumped at her and choked her till she was dead. (*Suiting imaginary action to the words.*) I gave her medicine. God Almighty could not, and humanity would not, help her, because she was poor. I did help her, comrades, did I not do right? Should I let her suffer so terrible any longer? I had not the heart to see any human being suffer so, but I had the courage to revenge myself on these unsatiable beasts who took from me and her the right to live.

BACHMANN. Sam, you are sick. You need rest.

SAM. Sick? I am sick. Your are right. Sick with hatred of humanity. My strength, my health, my very blood they sucked. No more am I a human being—nothing but a heap of misfortune. (*Points a weapon to his breast.* SELKOFSKY *and* BACHMANN *tear it from him.*)

SELKOFSKY. Friend, you must not do that. We will help you. We will save you.

BACHMANN. We will give you the rest you need.

SAM. You can give me to eat, to drink; my physical want satisfy; but my soul, my spiritual rest, you can give me no more. Too much have I suffered, too much committed. My heart is sore, my head is is sick. (*During the last words, appeals and wailings are heard. Nearer and nearer, until another crowd appears.*)

SEVERAL. Where is he? Where? Where? Where is he?

OTHERS. Here he is! That's the fiend! Lynch him!

BACHMANN. Step back, people. One wrong will not right another. Let us hear what he has got to say.

PEOPLE. Oh, our loved ones! Give us back our loved ones!

SAM. (*Looking on dismayed.*) Your loved ones? Give me my loved ones back—my parents, my sisters and brothers, my wife and child! With money I could have saved my whole family. I have sacrificed my family. All I can give you is my life.

A WELL-DRESSED MAN. Do you hear this wailing? Do you see these tears? All through you, you scoundrel!

SAM. You cry and wail for your loved ones, and you are but a few. Could you see the tears, the woe, of the thousands and thousands who suffer through your fault! Give me back my loved ones and I will give you back yours. (*Another crowd suddenly reaches the place.*)

SEVERAL. Where is he? Where is the beast? Down with him!

ONE. Is that the teaching you want to give us? And you want to control humanity! Down with anarchy! Down with him! Dog, what have you done? With what right do you grasp with murderous hands at human life? Murderer! Incendiary! (SAM *recoils.*)

BACHMANN and SELKOFSKY. Away there! (*Hold mob in check. Threats and curses are heard. A little girl pushes through the crowd to* SAM, *and cries.*)

LITTLE GIRL. Dear, kind sir, give me my papa back. He is all I had.

SAM. (*Cries with emotion. Turns to* SELKOFSKY.) For God's sake give me that weapon!

BACHMANN. You have no right to do it, Sam.

SAM. (*Holding back crowd.*) No right! Humanity took my right to live, and you take my right to die.

(*Crowd closes in on him. It quickly darkens.*)

SELKOFSKY. (*Hands him the revolver.*) God be your judge. (*Turns away overcome.*)

(*Former scene in subdued light,* SAM *drops off chair, dead.*)

BACHMANN. Sam, it is Sam. (*Overcome, nervously holds himself with one hand upon table, the other to his head.*)

SELKOFSKY. Sam, my poor friend! For humanity you suffered; alone to die.

THE END.

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